

Issue #8
Summer
1994

\$6.00

ANYTHING THAT MOVES

THE MAGAZINE FOR THE DISCRIMINATING BISEXUAL

R

Does porn. Fight's the Right. Flashes geek

SEXUALITY

Does our equality depend on who we do?

inside:

domestic violence • bi history
geek sexuali-tea • the ultra room



ANYTHING THAT MOVES:

THE MAGAZINE FOR THE DISCRIMINATING BISEXUAL

MOVE (MOOV): 1. TO ADVANCE, PROGRESS, OR MAKE PROGRESS. 2. TO CHANGE PLACE OR POSITION. 3. TO TAKE ACTION. 4. TO PROMPT, ACTUATE OR IMPEL INTO ACTION. 5. ACTION TOWARD AN END; A STEP. 6. TO SET IN MOTION; STIR OR SHAKE.

ABOUT OUR NAME . . .

Our choice to use this title for the magazine has been nothing less than controversial. That we would choose to redefine the stereotype that "bisexuals will fuck anything that moves," to suit our own purposes has created myriad reactions. Those critical of the title feel we are purporting the stereotype and damaging our image. Those in favor of its use see it as a movement away from the stereotype, toward bisexual empowerment.

We deliberately chose the radical approach. We are creating dialogue through controversy. We are challenging people to face their own external and internal biphobia. We are demanding attention, and are re-defining "anything that moves" on our own terms.

READ OUR LIPS:

WE WILL WRITE OR PRINT OR SAY
ANYTHING THAT MOVES US BEYOND THE
LIMITING STEREOTYPES THAT ARE
DISPLACED ONTO US.

This magazine was created by bisexuals and their friends. All proceeds are invested into its production and the bisexual community. It is published by the Bay Area Bisexual Network and reflects the integrity and inclusive nature of the BABN Statement of Purpose. ATM was created out of pride; out of necessity; out of anger. We are tired of being analyzed, defined and represented by people other than ourselves—or worse yet, not considered at all. We are frustrated by the imposed isolation and invisibility that comes from being told or expected to choose either a homosexual or heterosexual identity. Monosexuality is a heterosexist dictate used to oppress homosexuals and to negate the validity of bisexuality.

Bisexuality is a whole, fluid identity. Do not assume that bisexuality is binary or duogamous in nature: that we have "two" sides or that we **MUST** be involved simultaneously with both genders to be fulfilled human beings. In fact, don't assume that there are only two genders. Do not mistake our fluidity for confusion, irresponsibility, or an inability to commit. Do not equate promiscuity, infidelity, or unsafe sexual behavior with bisexuality. Those are human traits that cross ALL sexual orientations. Nothing should be assumed about anyone's sexuality—including your own.

We are angered by those who refuse to accept our

existence; our issues; our contributions; our alliances; our voice. It is time for the bisexual voice to be heard. Do not expect each magazine to be representative of all bisexuals, for our diversity is too vast. Do not expect a clear-cut definition of bisexuality to jump out from the pages. We bisexuals tend to define bisexuality in ways that are unique to our own individuality. There are as many definitions of bisexuality as there are bisexuals. Many of us choose not to label ourselves anything at all, and find the word 'bisexual' to be inadequate and too limiting. Do not assume that the opinions expressed are shared by all bisexuals, by those actively involved in the Bisexual Movement, by the ATM staff, or the BABN Board of Directors.

What you can expect is a magazine that, through its inclusive and diverse nature, creates movement away from external and internal limitations.

This magazine is about **ANYTHING THAT MOVES**: that moves us to think; that moves us to fuck (or not); that moves us to feel; that moves us to believe in ourselves—**To Do It For Ourselves!**

ABOUT BABN...

The Bay Area Bisexual Network is an alliance of bisexual and bi-supportive groups, individuals, and resources in the San Francisco Bay Area. BABN is coalescing the bisexual community and creating a movement for acceptance and support of human diversity by coordinating forums, social events, opportunities, and resources. We support relationships among people regardless of gender, which can include relating intellectually, emotionally, spiritually, sensually, and sexually. We support celibacy, monogamy, and non-monogamy as equally valid lifestyle choices. We support open expression of affection and touch among people without such expression necessarily having sexual implications. The BABN is by nature educational in that we are supporting the rights of all women and men to develop as whole beings without oppression due to age, race, religion, color, class or different abilities, nor because of sexual preference, gender identity, gender preference and/or responsible consensual sexual behavior preferences. We also support acceptance in employment, housing, health-care, and education. This includes access to complete sexual information, free expression of responsible consensual sexual activity, and other freedoms. Membership is open to all bi-positive people whether or not they consider themselves bisexual.

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LETTERS

Dear Anything That Moves,

We disagree with the decision made by the organizing committee not to include the words bisexual, drag, and transgender in the subtitle of Stonewall 25. It reflects an ambiguous commitment to the rights and liberation of bisexual, drag, and transgender people to include us in your literature but not in the title of Stonewall 25 itself.

The Stonewall rebellion resulted when a group of courageous people fought their police harassers. This group included drag queens, transgendered people, bisexuals as well as lesbians and gay men. Celebrating the anniversary of this event without celebrating or even mentioning drag queens, transgendered people, and bisexual people is rewriting history!

Drag queens, transgendered people, and bisexuals participate, and have always participated in every level of the "lesbian and gay" liberation struggle, acknowledged or not. You acknowledge in your literature that bisexuals, drag performers, and transgender persons are part of the "lesbian and gay" movement/community. However, you choose to include lesbian and gay, but not drag, transgender, and bisexual in the title. We have always been there, and we should be included and recognized at every level!

Juan Pablo Ordoñez Matomores, Stonewall 25 Coordinator of International Affairs, states that "Having separate labels for groups of people within the 'gay' community is a western way of thinking, with which other cultures don't necessarily identify." Nicole Ramirez Murray, Stonewall 25 co-chair, goes on to say that "Adding drag performers, transgendered people and bisexuals to the title would be confusing to people from countries which don't have words or translations for the term."

We at BiPol appreciate that cultural sensitivity is required when planning an international event of this sort, and that not all English words will translate accurately and gracefully into other languages. Our understanding of sexuality and gender (in the English-speaking U.S.) is probably different than that of other cultures. Translating the Stonewall 25 literature is undoubtedly a nightmare, and we sympathize. However we question some of the decisions which you have made. How will "drag queens," "transgender," and "bisexual" be translated where they are used in the literature? Why would they not be translatable if included in the title?

A Filipina in BiPol points out that homosexual women exist in the Philippines, but that there is no word which translates into "lesbian." Using Juan Pablo Ordoñez Matomores and Nicole Ramirez Murray's logic you should not include "lesbian" in the title. Does "gay" translate into every language?

The title of Stonewall 25 should either include all groups within our community, or none.

Thank you,
BiPol/San Diego

FROM THE EDITOR . . .

We have some new staff. Sadly, Tori, whose excellent organizational and editing skills will be sorely missed, has stepped down, and I, Mark Silver, have accepted the role of trying on her shoes. So far, they fit fine.

Anything That Moves realizes that this mag's beat has quite grown beyond the San Francisco Bay Area, and we are working to make it reflect as many of our voices as possible. So check out the submission guidelines, and send your stuff in. For October, we thought fruit stories might be fun. Tell us about your mango fantasies.

The other part of the editorial has to do with history and politics: don't let the latter allow the former to repeat itself. In many areas of the country, notably the urban areas, a queernaissance has erupted. Our recruitment drives are working, and more and more people boldly risk identifying with a more fluid sexual orientation.

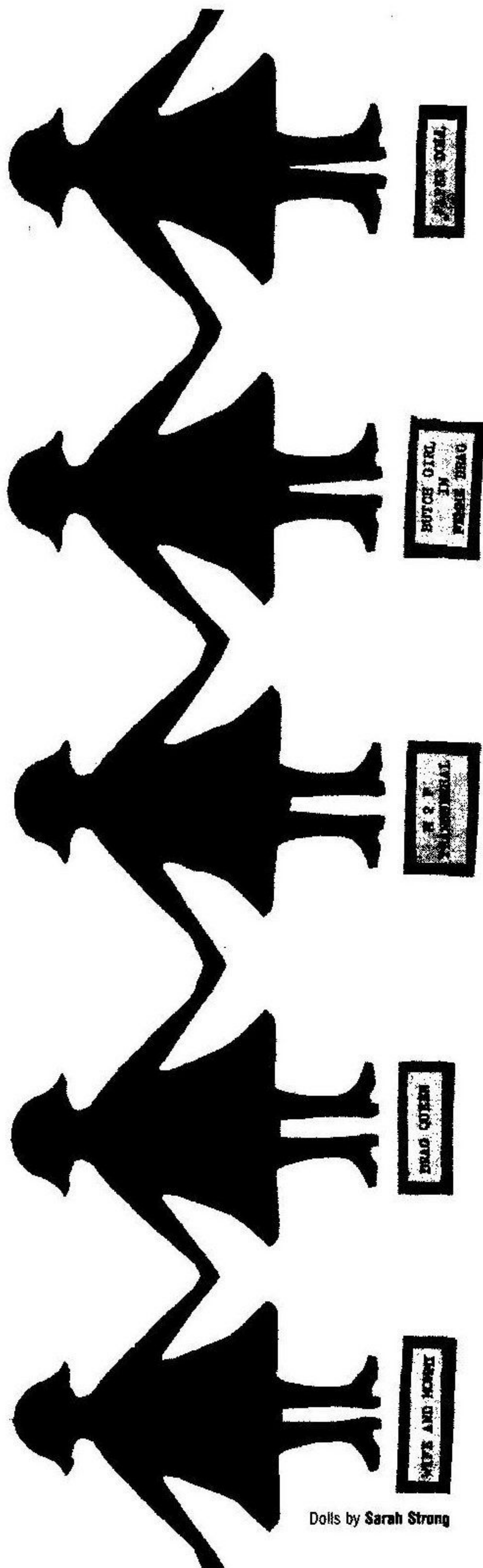
Still, I feel uneasy. As a Jew, I am noticing that the same thing happened in the twenties in Berlin. A growing gay and lesbian culture, similar to the growing acceptance of Jews, was blind to the fascist backlash. If we look at ourselves now, we might see a group of invincible queers. But during an extended economic recession and after 14 years of the same old Reagan-Bush-Clinton shit, many who have been tolerant of us are growing increasingly insecure. We are still being killed, and fired, and hated for who we are, and don't tell me how Apple has domestic partner benefits, please. All the politicking the radical right has been doing quietly for the last decade is starting to pay off with right-wing school boards and city councils everywhere, and the continued spread of the Colorado virus.

Despair? No way. Two things: First, be OUT. Out as bisexual. Don't let the biology as destiny question force the queer movement into "We can't help it, just leave us alone." We like whomever we like, and THAT's THAT! Sex and love don't depend on Tab A and Tab B, or Slot C and Slot D, Or Tabs A, G, J and Slots T and Y.

The media and some A-list gays and lesbians are intent on portraying the Gay Liberation Movement as white, suburban, and "Just Like You," as evidenced by transgender and bisexual invisibility in the Stonewall 25 title, and elsewhere. Transgenders and leather folk are the ones who were tough enough to dare people to accept them on their own terms. Now many of us who have enjoyed the fruits of these first fruits want to slip back into the mainstream and sell anyone who might upset Suburbia down the river. Don't let ignorant people define who we are. Show them we are *Anything That Moves*.

Second, build coalitions. Fancy words for making friends with dissimilar groups of people. The hatred against us grows alongside the racism, misogyny, and classism in this country. As people become more frustrated with their situation, the search is on for scapegoats. Our own struggle to build community is only strengthened when we spend time in others' communities, especially since, as queers, we intersect them all.

Then, of course, take photos, write it all down, and send it in to us.



Dolls by Sarah Strong

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Anything That Moves welcomes unsolicited manuscripts, photographs, and illustrations. *ATM* is a venue for bisexual writers and artists for publication of their work as well as a venue for work of interest to bisexuals. Priority is given to bisexual writers and artists. We are especially interested in work by people of color, transgender- or transsexual-identified, those who are differently abled, and those challenged by AIDS or HIV disease. *ATM* is particularly interested in material not previously published as well as submissions from new and unpublished writers. Notification of acceptance will be made within 6-8 weeks, although publication dates cannot be given (accepted material is often kept on file and considered for each new issue). Accepted material cannot be returned. Do not send originals, as *ATM* will not be responsible. Rejected material will be returned only if accompanied by the appropriate amount of postage.

All submissions must be accompanied by a cover letter that includes a brief (30 words or less) bio of the writer and a listing of submissions by title. Please indicate if the contribution has been published or submitted for consideration elsewhere. Pen names are permitted; however, the author's real name, address, and phone number must accompany the submission (not for publication).

WRITERS:

ATM accepts submissions such as literary, film, theater, and music reviews; fiction; non-fiction commentary and feature articles; and news reports of the bisexual community or individuals. Submissions should be typed, double-spaced, and must include the author's name, address and phone number on each page. A word count must appear on the title page of the manuscript. Submissions must include a SASE. Hand-written, illegible or single-spaced copy will be returned.

FICTION: *ATM* publishes 1-2 short stories per issue. Fiction should not exceed 2500 words. Any content is up for consideration and need not address bisexuality specifically, however, bisexual content is given priority. Content may or may not be erotic.

NON-FICTION COMMENTARY: *ATM* provides space for writers to explore contemporary issues related to bisexuality that are editorial in nature—personal opinions and viewpoints. Submissions should not exceed 600 words.

REVIEWS: *ATM* will include reviews of books, film, music, conferences, theater, etc., related to bisexual artists, topics, and/or themes as well as work of interest to bisexuals. Reviews should not exceed 800 words. When possible, black & white photo or stat of reviewed book jackets, or black & white theatrical/portfolio promotional photos to accompany reviews are greatly appreciated.

FEATURES & INTERVIEWS: *ATM* publishes features relating to any cultural, lifestyle, spiritual, sexual, health, relationship, or political angle of bisexual life.

ATM will gladly accept manuscripts on disk ONLY if accompanied by a hard copy. (Microsoft Word for Macintosh 4.0 or higher, please. If not, fully explain format in cover letter).

PHOTOGRAPHERS AND ILLUSTRATORS:

ATM is interested in receiving black & white photo submissions (single photos as well as photo essays), illustrations, computer graphics, and cartoons. Erotic/nude photos will be considered. All photos with models or subjects with identifiable and/or copyrighted likenesses must be submitted with a signed photo release form and age statement to be considered. Illustrations usually accompany fiction, political columns, and features. Cartoons/comics can be in either single panel or strip form. Illustrations must be submitted in stat, velox, or clean photo copy form. Do not submit originals, as *ATM* cannot be responsible for them. Photographer's, designer's or illustrator's name, address, and phone number must be attached to the back of each submission.

COMING OUT IN THE ULTRA ROOM

by Teresa Ann Pearcey

I had always referred to myself as bisexual, at least since that night I got really drunk and fucked that girl Nancy, whom I had just met that same night. I was very depressed about a guy, and she seemed very concerned and caring. What else was I to do when she invited me to spend the night and then started taking off her clothes? I ran to the mirror the next morning to see if I looked any different. Could people tell I wasn't straight? Well, I looked the same and went right back to dating only men.

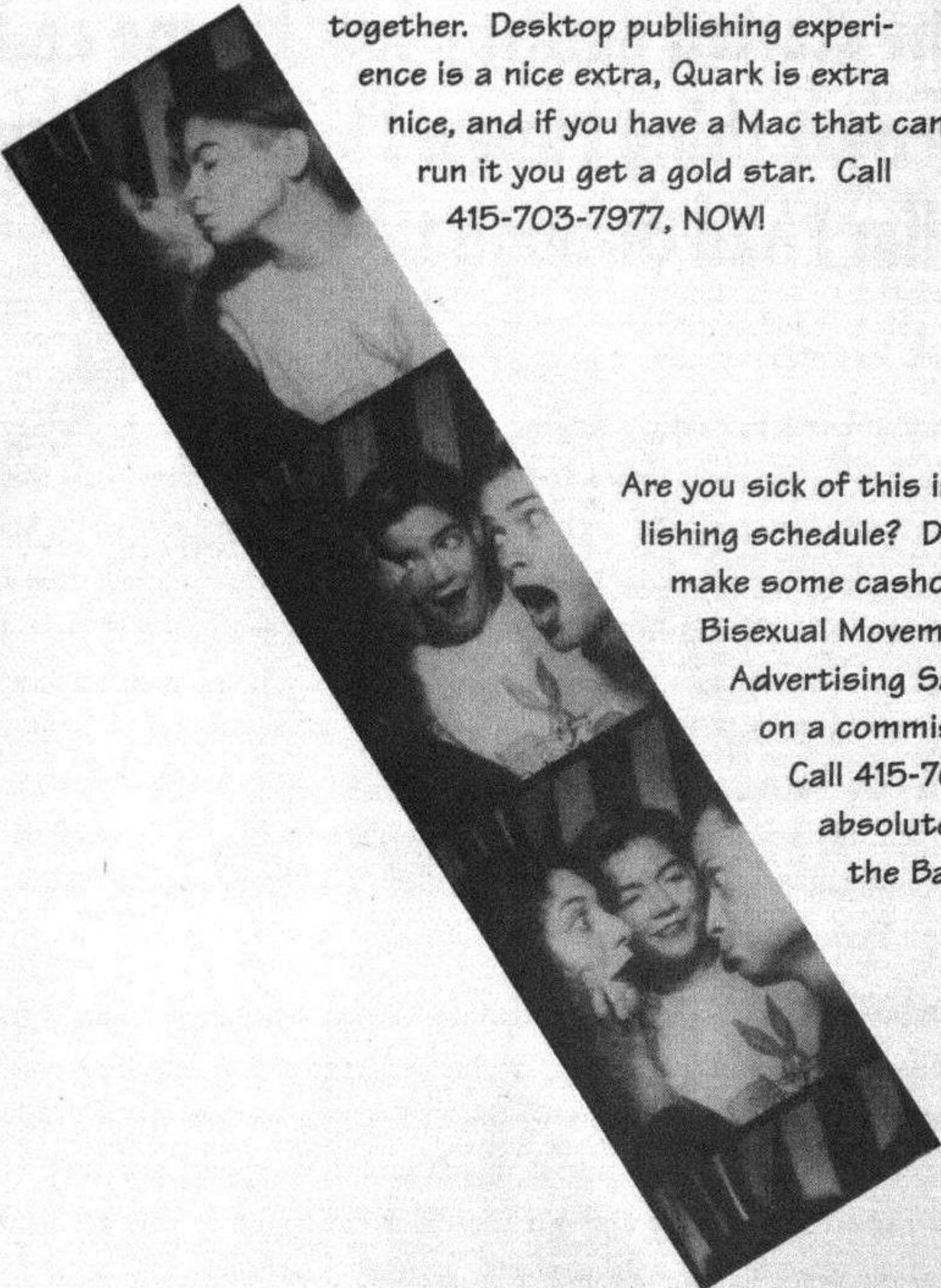
Every time I would get into a relationship with a man, I'd tell him in an apologetic whisper: "I'm bisexual." Whoever he was, he was usually quite intrigued, although one man verbally abused me with the information whenever we got into an argument. "Go bump pussy," he'd snarl. My first taste of queer bashing.

But I still wasn't queer-identified and years later, I went to a strip joint for a job interview and had my first true coming out experience.

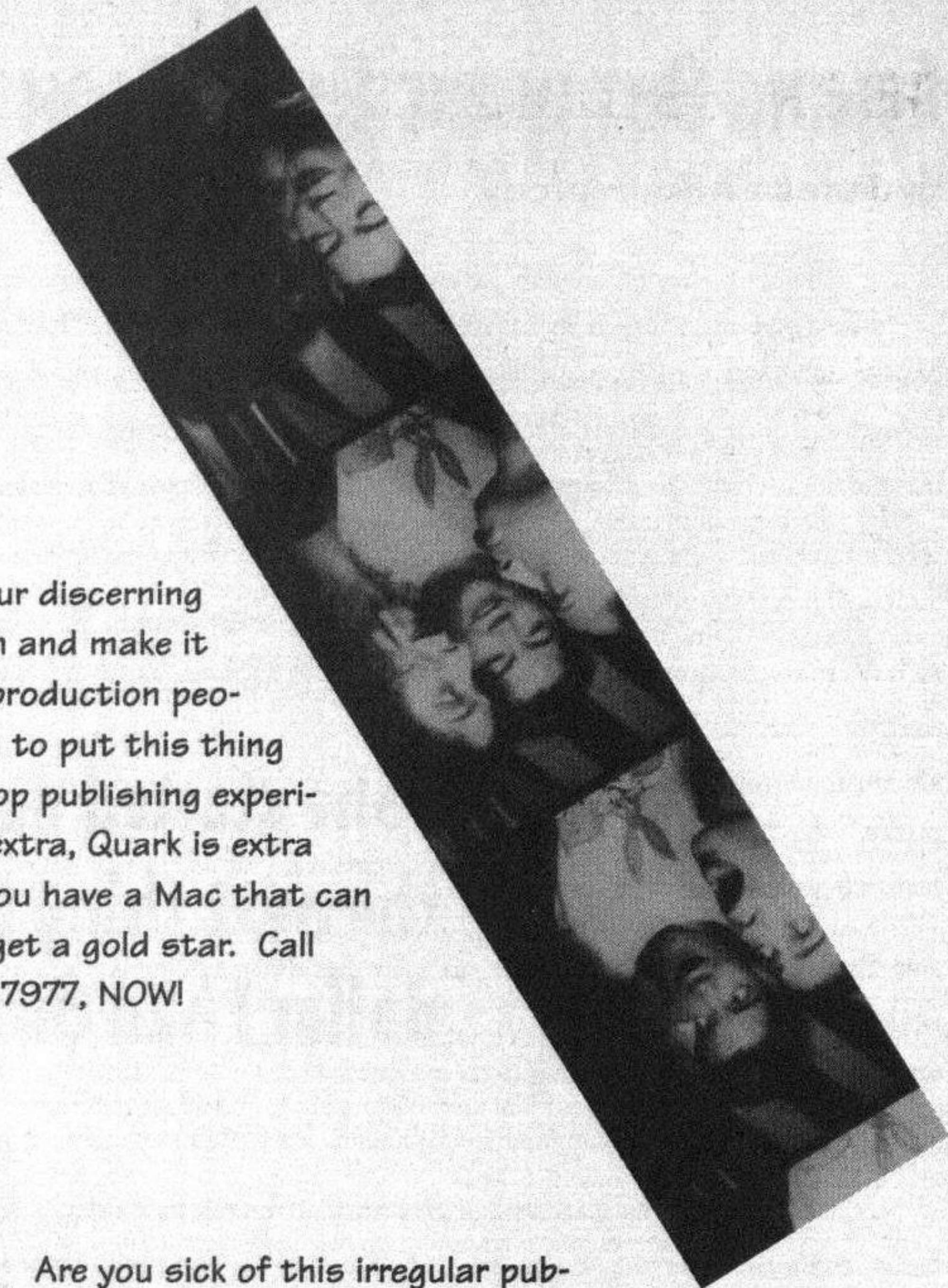
"She started dancing just for me and the next thing I knew I had put every dollar I had through the window."

Almost as soon as I arrived at the dance theater I decided stripping wasn't for me. There was no money to be made dancing on stage. In fact, you had to pay management for that privilege. The money made was earned "lap dancing" which looked too much like what my dad made me do when I was pubescent: sit on his lap and rock back and forth on his hard-on while he felt up my tits. On my way out of the dance theater, I couldn't resist the private booths that surrounded the "Ultra Room." I closed the door behind me and peered through the glass at two naked women. They were doing a "lesbian love scene," which didn't resemble anything I'd ever done in bed with a woman. Then the sexy blonde spotted my face in the window and made a bee-line for me. She started dancing just for me and the next thing I knew I had put every dollar I had through the window. I was sweating and shaking and my heart was pounding fiercely. After I ran out of money she had to leave and dance for the other windows which were spitting out ones and fives. I opened the door to my little cubicle and left on quivering legs. I cried as I drove home.

As I said earlier, I had always called myself bisexual because I had had one or two sexual experiences with women. And because I look at women "like a guy would." But there is a big difference between calling oneself bisexual and actually having a coming-out experience. My coming-out experience was visceral. I finally got that it wasn't a choice for me. My sexuality is in my bones and flesh and was there when I was born. I actually grieved the loss of choice because I realized that since my body was bisexual no matter what my head chose to be, I would never be able to fulfill my parents' hopes for me to be "normal" someday.



Is this magazine the bane of your discerning eye? Tell us. In fact, come down and make it pretty. ATM needs production people in the Bay Area to put this thing together. Desktop publishing experience is a nice extra, Quark is extra nice, and if you have a Mac that can run it you get a gold star. Call 415-703-7977, NOW!



Are you sick of this irregular publishing schedule? Do you want to make some cashola off of the Bisexual Movement? ATM needs Advertising Sales people to sell ads on a commission basis. Call 415-703-7977 to apply. Not absolutely necessary to live in the Bay Area.

GEEK SEXUALI-TEA

by Jennifer Yee

It was way past midnight. I was geeking¹, as usual, flipping through general Forum² on UNIX in my usual fashion—basically zooming through the messages, skimming to get the general content. Because of that espresso mocha, I wasn't ready to go to bed yet, and hell . . . it was better than studying.

Hitting the spacebar in a robotic fashion, I approached lesbigay³ node. There were new messages about gays in the military and an announcement about the Bi Women for Women meeting that week. Suddenly, a message from Hecate flashed before my droopy eyes.

"Let's have an all female geek queer tea party," the post announced. "It would be fun to have something in common with each other, unlike my experience with the campus gay clubs." A few anonymous people heartily agreed with the plan. I, as always, had to type in my bit.

```
lesbigay> w
lesbigay> Write your message, and end
with Ctrl-D
Name: sedona
Subject: tea party
Can we can we can we? It would be
awesome. And we can have naked mute
slaveboys like Susie Bright did at her
tea party? (Susie Bright's Virtual
Sex Reader).
<Ctrl-D>
Writing message... done with #655
```

A:> "Why do so many
queer women have
boyfriends? Where can
you buy the best leather
toys in SF? How did we
all become geeks...
and why?!?"

There. I had left my usual mildly obnoxious commentary. The next day, two men had already offered their services, but Hecate admonished me for being tacky. When we talked on the phone, she explained that, in her experience, the people who ordinarily show up at the queer groups on campus never have

anything in common with each other and wind up telling their coming out stories. Boring. No wonder I never made it to one of those groups. She wanted to bring together a group of people who had three characteristics: 1) female 2) queer 3) geek.

Sometimes it's tough being a female queer geek. You are some kind of droll minority. When you've got three strikes against you in this society, it can be triply hard. Even in a liberal lesbian-laden town like Santa Cruz. No wonder there are so many support groups around town. But what it is like when each group gets together? In my experience, an all-female group rarely bonds well together; sometimes the women are overly competitive when we should be supportive of each other. Maybe it's socialization, maybe backlash—I don't know. Hecate told me that the queer groups often are unproductive because there aren't enough commonalities to add any cohesiveness into the groups except for the mere fact that they are all queer. And when geeks get together. Oh my. Geeks are renowned for their lack of social skills. It's always fun to meet other geeks in the flesh that you "know" on-line, but the group as a whole can be unintentionally rude and intimidating. People get ignored all the time. So what would it be like for people with all three attributes to get together?

glossary

¹Geek: a heavy UNIX user. Mere possession of an account does not necessarily qualify one as a geek. Active participation in geek events, parties, forums, and multi-user programs is necessary to be a geek. A geek's social life often revolves around other geeks.

²Forums: Message databases in which users can post commentary or announcements under different topics or nodes, such as "general," "sex," "nocturnal cuisine," and lesbigay." Running arguments or discussions occur frequently, with sarcasm rampant, and generally in good fun. Parties, dinners, donut runs, and movie nights are easily organized under this format, as everything is publicly readable.

³Lesbigay: The lesbian, bisexual, and gay forum.

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GEEK SEXUALI-TEA . . . CONTINUED

Hecate let me know how things were progressing.

[lesbigay] Message 674 (27 left):
Sat Jan 23, 1993 12:41pm
From: hecate
Subject: i guess
4 lines (?)
potentially *tons* of women are showing
up at the tea party... how exciting!

I started to get worried. What was *tons* of women? Was my small flat large enough for this many people? What were we going to talk about? I quickly emailed⁴ Hecate to get details. She promised to organize the list and to get people to bring "tasty stuff." I nominated myself to write the formal invitation to be emailed.

*****Queer Female Geek Tea Party*****
Friday, January 29, 8:00pm

You've seen them flame⁵ each other online, but are they really as butch in person?? Meet your fellow queer women geeks at a beverage party. Conversation may include topics such as:

Why do so many queer women have boyfriends?

Where can you buy the best leather toys in SF?

How did we all become geeks . . . and why?!?

Remember, NO topic is taboo! This gathering is just for people with certain commonalties to meet, relax, gossip, eat, and drink. >>Optional Blue Lagoon run afterwards for those who wish to attend.<<

I emailed this to Hecate, who embellished it and sent it out to seven people. Seven people? Is that a *ton*? I can deal

with seven people. But I was also disappointed. I knew half of the people on the list, and some people that weren't on the list should have been. And there are the normal no-shows. Should we mail this to other people who haven't RSVPed?

In the geek "subculture" there is a fine line between information transferred via computer and information passed in person. For example, I first met Hecate when she read my finger file (a publicly readable file that tells users something about myself), and emailed me about it. We emailed each other for awhile, and then I took her to her first geek fud run⁶ and got to meet her "in the flesh." Later we became weirdly non-monogamous lovers, but that's another story. In fact, a user can learn quite a bit about others by reading forum posts over time and piecing together their personality by the way they post. So even though I hadn't met many of the guests in person, or even emailed them, I had a good idea of each one's personalities, temperaments, and attitudes simply by reading their forum posts.

All the morning of the tea party I spent cleaning up the apartment and pulled my back. I ran errands all afternoon and bought some dip and veggies. Hecate came over for dinner and to help set up my apartment at 6:00pm, while I was talking to my boyfriend on the phone. "Have fun at your weird lesbian gathering," he quipped. I laughed and hung up.

Sappho showed up at 7:55pm—the only punctual geek I know. I had read her forum posts and they were always extremely well-reasoned and, better yet, I generally agreed with them! So I had definitely wanted to meet her for a long time. She was a large woman in her thirties, famous for her "Fat Dyke From Hell" pin. One abusive marriage and two kids later, she became a re-entry student and ran the Pagan node in yam. She walked over to my bookshelf and selected the Advocate Adviser to browse through.

The next guest was a short and bubbly redhead that I had never seen or heard of before. Mickah was her account name. Dressed in a long flowered dress with big army boots and a strange gold Ferrari jacket, she said she heard about the tea party from a conversation with two other users on ICB⁷, but wasn't sure if they were being serious. I got her a cup of tea. It turned out that she was the only queer student (besides the residential assistant) on the lesbigay theme floor in my old dorm. Then there was another knock on the door.

glossary

⁴Email: Electronic mail. Messages that can be sent to other users to wait in their account, "mailbox," until they are read.

⁵Flame: To bombard someone with abusive statements.

⁶Fud Runs: Late night gatherings at restaurants like Lyons or Foster's. Many curly fries are consumed.

⁷ICB: International Chat Board. A multi-user program that facilitates a real-time conversation between people from all around the world.

Femme and Knifegurl then graced us with their presence. Two gorgeous and spunky women, the two of them used to be lovers until Femme moved to Vienna for the summer. They were both wearing weird plastic glasses and dressed in stylish clubbing clothing. Throughout the whole evening I kept compulsively staring at Femme's ripped fishnets. They heard about the party from my friend Maus. "Oh, she flaked out at the last two minutes," Knifegurl said, "She's sitting around in her bathrobe." Those two sat down to gossip.

Some time passed and a couple of new geeks showed up. Aria and Dede looked nervous. Aria was a freshperson who got into the geek scene dangerously fast IMHO⁸. I could tell by the addiction to ICB. Dede was a mellow semi-hippy type with a nose ring. Dede was the first woman that Aria ever kissed, or so I read on forum. Both were young and had a sense of... pureness. I had seen them around at donut runs, but hadn't gotten a chance to talk to them before. They sat down and then the group came together.

People were talking as a whole group. Constantly playing hostess, I only caught snippets of the conversation. There was talk about some guy from New Zealand named Kiwi who constantly harassed the users with female names on ICB. This prompted a discussion about how female users get unsolicited talk-requests⁹ which interrupt what you are doing and are very annoying. It's like your phone ringing all the time, but your caller ID says it's a stranger. I never answer talk requests in general. A few guys have aliased themselves with female names just to confuse the idiots on ICB into thinking they are female.

The conversation turned to more mundane topics like movies, video games, and temp jobs until the last guest, Rho, showed up breathless and sporting quite a bit of motorcycle gear. She looked larger than life. I had met her over a year ago and was very impressed by her vivacious personality. The dusty blond scattered Cheeze-Its on a plate and plopped down on the couch. She complained about her botched nipple piercing a few days ago—evidently, the piercer had to try it three times because of faulty jewelry. Then Femme started talking about her multiple body piercings. Sappho was then prompted to talk about how she self-pierced her nose back in the 70's.

The conversation ebbed and flowed. I gave out a lot of UNIX advice, about reading forums, Usenet, and finger files. I also suggested a cannibal movie night with *Silence of the Lambs*, *Eating Raoul*, and *Amazon Women in the Jungle of Death* for the next group meeting. Surprisingly, no specifically queer topics were discussed. Perhaps that was good. I just wanted the group to bond in general, and Hecate wanted us to become good enough acquaintances so that we didn't ignore each other at geek events.

Eventually people started to leave, saying how happy they were to finally meet each other. I think we all realized how hard it is for females to become friends. And have our own space together for fun. And be able to talk about subjects like body piercing without censoring ourselves. The queer part in all of us didn't necessarily come out, however. Perhaps later, when we are all more comfortable with each other.

Hecate and I went to the Blue Lagoon and danced. Why did everyone look so nice that night? Probably because I got to see the nice side of queer females earlier in the evening. They all had wonderful personalities and I wanted to get to know them all better. We

spent the rest of the night wondering what we should do next: Pictionary? Movies? Shopping in the City? When we got back to my place, an email message was waiting for me, just a few minutes old:

Message 4:

From femme Sat Jan 30 01:22:58 1993
Date: Sat, 30 Jan 93 01:22:55 -0800
From: femme
To: sedona
Subject: express service

Just wanted to say thank you for the tea soiree. Very nice. I enjoyed it a lot.

That made my night.

glossary

⁸IMHO: In my honest opinion. Because everything is typed, geeks often use acronyms in their postings.

⁹Talk-requests: UNIX function that allows two users to have a virtual conversation on a split screen.

THE STORY OF CHRISTA WINSLOE & DOROTHY THOMPSON

Christa Winsloe (1888-1944) and Dorothy Thompson (1893-1961) fell in love with each other in Europe when they were both famous writers in the glory days of the late Weimar Republic. Christa was the author of the play, *Maedchen (Girls) in Uniform*, a popular success on the Berlin, London, and New York stages. This tale of suppressed lesbian longing in a Prussian girls' boarding school was being turned into a film which became an overnight classic. Dorothy Thompson, the first female foreign correspondent from the United States, was fast becoming America's most prominent journalist. She was married to Sinclair Lewis, the novelist, and they had one child, Michael, who was two when Dorothy and Christa fell in love. Their three-year love affair and decade-long friendship is described in the three biographies that have been written of Dorothy Thompson. But no one has ever written their story from Christa's point of view.

The two first met through Christa's husband. Baron Hatvany, a Hungarian literary and political figure. Dorothy's friendship with Hatvany eclipsed Christa, whose contribution to the social setting was mainly in the role of host-

was mainly in the role of hostess. "Surely I bored her in those days," wrote Dorothy in her frank diary, "I was on the political side of the dinner table." But when Dorothy invited her to a weeklong Christmas bash in Vienna and the celebrated playwright appeared alone, Dorothy suddenly saw Christa in a new way.

“Her name suddenly had a magic quality,” wrote Dorothy. “Christa ... I wanted to say it, to use it. I talked about her to others to hear her name. Like holding an amulet in your hand. I love this woman. There it stands, and makes the word ‘love,’ applied to any other woman, ridiculous.” Dorothy left the villa after New Year’s and traveled to Hatvany, Hungary, where Christa lived, leaving Sinclair Lewis and their son in Vienna.

Dolly my darling -
 I'm so glad to hear that
 the school was being turned in
 overnight classic. Dorothy
 foreign correspondent from
 becoming America's most
 was married to Sinclair
 they had one child,
 Dorothy and Charles
 year love affair
 described in
 have been
 Thompson
 ten the
 of view
 the

It is not clear how familiar they were with the lesbian scene in Berlin, but Christa always pursued lesbian themes in her writing. She had dark hair, a "mannish cut," and wore tweeds, but was reputedly "immensely feminine looking and soft." In the best photo we have of her she is wearing a man's white shirt, tie, and tweed skirt. Apparently she was very attractive to men and women. The word always used to describe her was "sensitive" according to biographer Jimmy (Vincent) Sheean; "She could pass without transition from laughter to tears and back again." She was spontaneous and straightforward.

Dorothy Thompson was heterosexually identified. She wrote in her journal: "I feel like a love-struck adolescent, with this sweet curious intensification of feeling, this extraordinary heightening of impressions. It was so when I read her book and suddenly I felt I must translate it because its essence I might have written myself. I was Manuela [heroine of *Maedchen in Uniform*]. As she is Manuela and everything that has happened to her has in essence happened to me. This incredible feeling of sisterhood."

It is not clear from Dorothy Thompson's diaries whether she identified with Manuela because she was a lesbian or because she was an orphan. Dorothy had suffered greatly from losing her mother at an early age; in the story *Manuela* is an orphan who is placed in a boarding school which trains the future mothers of soldiers in the qualities of obedience and self-sacrifice.

In the play, Manuela's emotional deprivation culminates in being rejected by the teacher she has fallen in love with. Unable to hear this, Manuela jumps down a stairwell. This, Christa's original tragic ending, was changed in the film version; the film ends with Manuela being pulled back and saved. (For decades, critics perceived the film's boarding school setting as a statement against fascism while ignoring the lesbian content which is in fact the source of the film's resistance. The lesbian content of the film was only recognized favorably in the 1970s when women's film festivals began to feature it.)

Dorothy agonized over her attraction to Christa. She wrote her a sonnet: "What can I do then, with this so great love — I being woman. There is no release in intermingled flesh; I cannot prove with lips and hands my love. There is no peace. For you in me no shoulder bringing rest. These bones like

yours, these too receptive thighs, this yielding flesh, these arms, this too soft breast offer you nothing, for they say who lie with her own flesh lies with futility. Shall I then for some pity beg of you pardon for living in humility? Rather, I swear, I know this to be true: this love will find its form nor be less fair because it is incarnal as the air."

Christa was reportedly seen pacing their outside deck in Portofino, clutching this sonnet from Dorothy in her hand.



For in spite of Dorothy's confusions, she had left her husband and son (who returned to their farm in Vermont) and lived with Christa for six weeks in Portofino in 1933. They both looked back on their time there as their best and happiest time together. They were both writing, walking in pine forests and sitting together by the sea. Later Christa wrote to Dorothy: "Dotto, hold close to me, please ... or I'll collapse. You are dearer to me than you know ... *Liebes Dotto Du* ... Whenever I think of you I see your dear blue eyes filling with tears. Don't cry. I kiss you darling and stroke your hair, my grauli Maui Du."

Most of Dorothy Thompson's letters to Christa were lost in World War II, but Christa's ardent soulful letters to

Dorothy, phrased in a jumble of German and English, are preserved with the Thompson archives at Syracuse University. Apparently no attempt was made to censor or explain these letters. They are signed "Chris" or "Christian." She used the masculine pronoun in German for both she and Dorothy and makes references to the lesbian culture of the time. She wrote, "I love you and I rejoice to know how your care and your love surround me. I have slept in your eiderdown; I have drunk your wine, and I am using your face creme and wearing your slacks. It's as though I exist as a creation of my Dotto."

Dorothy Thompson became an enormous celebrity when she was kicked out of Germany by Hitler in 1934. She brought Christa back to the United States as a German exile, linking her in the public mind to her opposition to Hitler. They met the press together at the pier upon their arrival from Portofino. Dorothy introduced Christa as one of the leaders of the anti-Nazi crusade. At the time they were the only public

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LOVE BEFORE THE WAR . . . CONTINUED

anti-Nazis in New York. Independently they hit the lecture circuit. Then Christa was invited to live with the Lewises at Twin Farms in Vermont. There was no concealment of the fact then that Christa and Dorothy were a couple. "If you asked Dorothy to dinner you asked Christa too," said John Farrar, the publisher of "Maedchen in Uniform" in English. It became a matter of interest to see them in New York apart and each was always asked about the other when they were. A visitor at Twin Farms remembers them staggering home from a party laughing and falling into bed together.

But "der Rote," as Christa called Sinclair Lewis, eventually got too jealous and kicked Christa out. Their triangle had become "overwrought." Christa was sent to Virginia Beach to stay with Lewis' ex-wife. But through all this personal drama, it was the take-over of Germany that ultimately determined her fate. She wrote to Dorothy from Virginia Beach: "You know that the world, our world, is passing away ... I want so badly to write something that will shock people awake, a terrible warning about what is coming ... before war-stupidity and madness. But I am talentless Dotto, I have only rage inside me, no power. Why Dotto, why am I not a MAN?"

Dotto was not a man either, but she had a famous novelist by her side and she had a radio program and was syndicated in two hundred newspapers. While Dorothy always declared her love for Christa and reserved an intensity for her that she never used to describe anyone else, she did not seem to recognize the enormous imbalance of power that Christa was always dealing with. Christa didn't have an audience for her writing (which was in German), and was unable to persuade Hollywood to accept her homosexual-themed material. In the United States, Christa as a writer of power had lost her context. She had neither a partner, recognition, success, nor even a child. "You have Mike," Christa wrote Dorothy before leaving America the last time, "you have work, success. Be satisfied." By 1936 she was back in Europe. She returned to the south of France where refugees from bohemia of eastern Europe were sitting out the war. Dorothy was not separating from Red, as Christa had suggested in one of her letters, "otherwise you'll be kaput with me. I can't be alone," she wrote, "you made me dependent on you and got me used to it."

But Dorothy wrote to her: "I feel something between us has broken, that all that love — I wonder if it was ever there? Oh yes it was there, but did all the threads run from me to you and none really run back? I write with my eyes full of tears and my heart full of tears and I wish they flowed for someone else because then you might comfort me. Or would you? Why is it

that one's own love can sustain one for so long without any reciprocity, and then suddenly it can't anymore? I had a strange dream last night. I dreamed I was putting out on a very rough sea and all the crew were women. I was afraid and woke up sweating ... Christa!" Christa had experienced many similar "frightful longings" for Dorothy, but the violence of the historical period basically took over Christa's life.

During World War II Christa lived in the south of France with a Swiss painter named Simone Gentet. She hoped to live out the rest of the war "unmolested by politics" as she wrote to Dorothy. She did return to Germany but refused to cooperate with Nazi filmmakers or publishers and in 1938 headed for Paris to do a film with G. W. Pabst. The film was a critical flop. Three days after its opening Hitler invaded France. Unable to return to Germany, although she had a house in Munich, she published a sarcastic piece about Hitler in Amsterdam called "Passegiere." But she had no source of income and faced serious impoverishment. Dorothy sent Christa and Simone food and money. There are suggestions in correspondences that Christa helped Jews escape in many ways from both Germany and France, but for obvious reasons, she never directly referred to this in her letters to Dorothy. Then, in 1944, Dorothy stopped hearing from Christa entirely.

A few years after the War Dorothy found out that Christa and Simone Gentet had been murdered on June 10, 1944. She demanded that the French authorities account for their deaths and learned that Christa was possibly shot by a gang of mercenaries during the disturbances that followed the liberation of France.

As Christa and Simone were leaving for Germany with some German soldiers they might have been perceived as the enemy and shot, either by the Maquis (the Resistance) or by those posing as the Maquis, actually common looters and rapists. Dorothy had wanted Christa's death accounted for, but as she later wrote, "What consequence is that in these indiscriminate times? The life of that sensitive woman made for beauty and love was a series of violences; the violence done to her by a Prussian boarding school, of Nazism, of World War II that made her an exile." And finally, Christa was felled for being in the wrong place at the wrong time possibly as a German speaker in a France where Germans were retreating. The intellectually free and creative era of the 20s where Christa flourished, with its wealth of opportunity for the artist, free thinker, writer, and sexual minority was not to come around again for many more years.



BIYOUTH

the flamer files by Terri Flamer

Now that I'm nearing 24 years old, I've been thinking a lot about some of my early queer experiences that made me who I am today. One day in 1979 when I was around 8 or 9 years old, I went to the playground to see if the guys from the block would let me in on their basketball game. Since my presence made the number of players uneven, we had to play a different game. The oldest boy suggested "horse," but there were too many of us and the game would go too slow.

"How 'bout we play, 'smear the queer?" a boy asked. Almost everyone answered with an agreeing hum.

Being the only girl, I really wasn't into making these guys mad since I wanted to play so bad, but, the name of the game made my stomach hurt. Kind of like the feeling you get when someone insults you to your face. I didn't know why I reacted that way at the time, but I knew I had to speak up.

Walking off the court I said, "I guess I'll sit this one out."

"What's wrong with you?" the oldest boy asked.

I looked him in the eye and asked, "Isn't that game made up by the same folks who made up, 'eenie, meenie mieni, mo, catch a nigger by his toe?"

"That's how we chose up sides before you came," said the one who picked the game, sort of mocking me.

"Pitiful. Doesn't 'smear the queer' have a couple of other names?" I asked.

The older boy answered, "Yeah, 'hunch' or 'piss out.' We can call it 'piss out' to make you happy, o.k.? Can we play now?"

By 8th grade I had 'baby dyke' written all over my prepubescent face. I had lots of close friendships with other girls but nothing intimate. Then my friend Leslie from church introduced me to a girl she went to private school with named Kym. This was around the time three-way calling was popular, and the three of us talked every night for weeks. Kym and I began to stay on the line to talk long after Leslie had gone to bed. There was something different about the way Kym and I would talk to one another without Leslie. But we didn't see each other due to our separate after school activities.

One night as we were ending our conversation she blurted out, "I love you." And hung up. I was stunned.

The next day, we decided it was time to meet each other at 4:00pm in the public library. I could hardly sit still all that day during school. I was the first to arrive. She had told me to sit with my back to the door so I wouldn't freak out every time someone walked in. So I sat there trying to look like I was reading. When Kym slid in the chair across from me, I think it probably took us 5 minutes to look up at each other. But when

we finally did ... POW! I was in love.

She went over to get the bathroom key then walked back by our table and gestured for me to follow. Once inside the bathroom, Kym tossed the keys to the floor, pinned me to the wall and kissed me deep. I had never felt anything so incredible in my life. I had kissed boys before and I like that fine, but when she kissed me, all the forbidden crushes I had had for years on everyone from my homeroom teach to the Avon lady were validated.

In the weeks that followed, we made every attempt to be alone in that first floor bathroom. We were pretty lucky we never got caught. Then one day after about a half an hour in there, the janitor used his key and walked into the bathroom. Before he rounded the corner, Kym screamed she was "in changing." He quickly apologized and left.

We laughed but decided to find another venue for our affection.

My mom worked in the same building as the library. I spent time there with her on Saturdays and knew which rooms were safe and which weren't. I chose a room with a back door next to the fire escape. We would go there after making an appearance in the library. We'd study for a while, make out some or just try to figure out what we were doing meant.

Soon after we started going to our special room, we were followed. Kym had told me she had a boyfriend but he was doing time for drugs.

During a kiss, I opened my eyes and spotted a pair peering back. I told Kym what I'd seen and we grabbed our stuff. I walked her home then headed back through the parking lot of the library towards my house. This voice behind me said, "Were you just with Kym?" I turned around and met the same eyes I saw looking through the door at us. "Yeah, why?" I nervously stammered.

"You stay away from her. I don't care if you're that way, but you leave her alone."

He didn't touch me or anything but, boy, was I scared.

As soon as I got home I called her and told her what had just happened. She told me she would talk to him and not to worry about it. I was spooked. Next time we were to be alone, I suggested we go to my house. She was nervous about my mom being there but went along anyway. When we arrived my mom was home but on the phone. I quickly introduced her to Kym, told her we really needed to study and hustled off to my room.

At this point all Kym and I ever did was play kiss and fondle—never did I even think of doing more. I learned quickly. And practiced daily.

NAME THAT THANG

LANGUAGE, LABELS AND IDENTITY

by Sarah Pemberton Strong

Recently I heard about a pre-Columbian society in South America which had survived into the twentieth century completely free from contact with the rest of the world. Anthropologists studying the culture of these people found in their language a very interesting absence: they had no word for war.

Language is a powerful shaper of reality. The words we have give us the ability to communicate within our culture; they also define what that culture is. The words we lack are words for things that we as a culture cannot imagine: things that, for us, do not exist.

My friend Jessie, whose gender is not readily apparent, is frequently stopped on the street by complete strangers who ask, "Excuse me, but are you a man or a woman?"

"Guess what?" goes Jessie's standard answer, "It doesn't matter!"

Yet everything in our language screams that it does. English — like all languages — recognizes two distinct categories of human gender: male and female. No word exists to describe a third gender or a combination of the two. Without such a word it is difficult for us to imagine — much less discuss — the concept. Yet people are living lives and embracing identities which transcend the mutually exclusive categories of he and she.

We are a society in love with categories, with labels, with deciding who fits where. Those who don't fit neatly under any existing label are perceived as threatening: if we have no word to describe them, they are outside our cultural frame of reference, outside reality as we know it. They bring us face to face with our fear of difference and our fear of the unnamed.

Imagine if we'd all grown up with a non-gender specific pronoun. If instead of he/she, we were used to thinking of people as he, she, and say, "ze." The masculine/feminine dichotomy on which civilization as we know it is based would not exist. And people would stop bothering Jessie with stupid questions. But of course, there is no such word as "ze." In a culture hell-bent on polarizing everything into two distinct, either/or camps, words that represent a continuum of experience are hard to come by.

Many of us who are bisexual (ac/dc? switch hitters? pandrogynically inclined?) have had some wild battles with language and labels. When I was nineteen, I came out as a lesbian. The word lesbian was as frightening and alluring as sex itself, it was something you were not supposed to talk about, something that was not supposed to exist, and yet it did exist, I had found it inside myself. When I began to use the word "lesbian" to identify myself, I became part of a community that gave me a whole new perspective on the world. So many things I had believed to be Just The Way Things Are — relationships, styles of communication, emotional expectations, sex — turned out to be changeable after all. I had choices. My universe expanded.

Five years after I declared myself a dyke I realized that I wanted to go out with men again. I flipped out. The label I thought was mine was being torn off, and the universe that seemed so big had just shown its nasty edges. I was terrified. I didn't know what was out there. I was afraid of the unknown.

During this period of secret panic, every so often while reading a piece of safer-sex literature, I'd come



across the phrase "lesbians who have sex with men." I'd read it two or three times over and feel a surge of relief. As in, "Whew — I can have sex with men and still be a lesbian!"

I look at that terminology now and disagree. In my book, "lesbian-who-has-sex-with-men" is a euphemism born out of the desire to avoid that terrible word, bisexual. But then, there are women who identify as lesbians and have sex with men. There are women who identify as straight and have sex with women. There are men who used to be women who have sex with women, and women who dress up as men and have sex with each other.

Life is infinitely more colorful than language.

When I finally started dating a man again, I watched the femme-dyke look I'd had since college take a sharp turn towards the butch: the haircut got closer and closer to my scalp, the combat boots were never off my feet, the skirts stayed in the closet and if any lipstick got worn it got worn by him. Of course, clothes do not a true butch make, and what was happening to me was simply that although I was in a heterosexual relationship I didn't feel any more straight than I ever had. The thought that I might "look straight" — and be presumed straight by virtue of the person on my arm — made me feel as if my reality and hard-won sense of myself were being erased.

Silly me! On our second date, this man and I were standing on a street corner kissing and three guys walking by took one look at us, thought I was a man, yelled "Faggots!" and threw one of those quart-sized Seven-Eleven cups of Pepsi at my head.

Yeah, I got fag-bashed for kissing a boy. Is there a word for that?

Times aren't what they used to be. Once upon a time the word "queer" was a derogatory name for people who knocked booty with the same gender that they showered with in the locker room.

Today, despite a certain amount of protest from older gay men and lesbians who remember the sting of that word, "queer" has been embraced by everyone, from in-your-face Queer Nation activists to in-your-ivory-tower-queer-theorists as the new word for this, uh, thing that the words gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender just don't encompass any more.

What is queer theory? Ask one of its disciples and you'll get an answer that goes something like this: "Queer theory? Oh, it's the problematization of gender through the deconstruction of performativity and the appropriation and surfacization of identity constructs." (Language, you gotta love it.) Give the queer theorist a

protracted blank look and they may deign to translate into the common tongue: "Okay, like an example of queer theory would be, like, say a girl is wearing a dress. See, she's really in drag just as much as a guy would be because a dress is just a symbol of femininity that is totally artificial no matter who's wearing it, and besides, femininity is like, a social construct anyway."

Oh. Wish I'd known that when the brim-full Big Gulp collided with my head.

Queer theory, despite its inaccessibility to those of us outside academia, is nevertheless undertaking an important task. It is attempting to create words which will enable us to analyze experience from perspectives that our language — i.e., our culture — has not previously allowed. But the clunkiness with which it does this — problematization?! come on — cries out for the streamlined simplicity of slang (genderfuck!). Elitist language never inspired a revolution.

What is slang? Words about sex. Words about drugs. Code words. Words within marginalized communities. Impassioned words. Derogatory words. Words not in the dictionary. Words which describe ideas that somehow threaten to rock the boat of the status quo, and are thus given the label "slang," which categorizes them as lesser, as not quite real. "Standard" English is the only real language, we're taught. Anything else doesn't count. American Black English, a language in its own right, is dismissed as "dialect." West Indian speech is derided as "pidgin." Words created by the gay community are called "slang." And most women have had the experience of not being taken seriously at work unless they present their ideas in language that is like a man's.

By seeing these forms of expression as subordinate, their speakers are seen as subordinate, too. Your words may exist, but if they're not in standard English, we don't have to pay attention to them. Or to you.

Yet those of us who are marginalized in this way continue to create words, to speak in other tongues, other voices. And we continue to behave and feel in ways no language can yet describe. Suppose we'd all grown up hearing the words "gay," "lesbian," "bisexual," "transgender" spoken as easily as the words "wedding," "television," "baseball," "restaurant"? Suppose there were words for all the shades and phases and nuances of experience that exist in between those labels? Coming out would be a completely different experience. Perhaps the phrase "coming out" would even cease to exist, there would no longer be anything to come out of. We would already be in.

TIPPECANOE AND KA'AHUMANU TOO

by Lani Ka'ahumanu

Images courtesy of Lani



The day after the 1984 San Francisco Lesbian/Gay Freedom Day Parade I was working at The Valencia Rose¹, behind the counter serving lattes, soup and sandwiches. The Rose, as we lovingly called her, was a lesbian and gay comedy club and cultural center housed in a three story building purposely painted "titty pink". Tom Ammiano, Marga Gomez, Romanofsky and Phillips, Lea Delaria and Jeannine Strobel, Suzy Berger, Monica Palacios, and Doug Holsclaw were but a few of the talents honing their skills at open mic and Gay Comedy Night. The Rose was the first gay comedy club in the country and the hub of cultural and political activity for lesbian, gay and bisexual people in the mid-1980s. The city was bracing itself for the Democratic Convention and the Reverend Jerry Falwell's "Brotherhood Family Forum" convention.

Someone from the Parade office which was upstairs on the second floor came in with a morning paper. I couldn't believe my eyes. There was the BiPOL contingent on the front page of the San Francisco Chronicle accompanying the Parade story. We had made the front page!! Our contingent led by then San Francisco Mayor (now Senator) "Bi-Anne" Feinstein and the UK's pregnant Princess "Bi" (now an ex-princess) could be seen waving from the BIG '72 convertible. The huge sign covering the front grill reading "Mayor Bi-Anne and Princess Bi Welcome You to the SF Bi Area" was airbrushed out of the photo. The rented convertible was followed by giant sandwich board cut-outs of Bi-Cuspids and BiValves, a Bi-Detector robot, and me (Bi and Large) among others. On that day we put to rest the notion that bisexuals are boring confused "wanna be" gays and lesbians. Not only had we won the Most Outrageous Contingent Award in the Parade but we made the front page! BiPOL's goal for 1984 was visibility, and we were off to a great start.

I'll never forget our meeting a couple days later. Alan Rockway, Bill Mack, Autumn Courtney, Maggi Rubenstein,

Bob Kuntz (an out of town friend of Alan's), Arlene Krantz and I were sitting around telling our stories to Autumn who had been working as Co-chair of Parade merchandising. We were riding high. Bisexuals had been loud and proud and ever so campy for the two-mile parade route. The seven of us sat there reveling in our bad ass bisexual high. The comraderie, the sense of accomplishment, and VISIBILITY were very heady stuff.

Alan was always one to play the media. Way back in

January he told us there were going to be 5,000 extra reporters in town for the Democratic Convention. He knew the media would arrive two weeks early during Pride Week and be looking for stories. Bill's and my ideas had sparked the flamboyant parade contingent and our first political but-

ton - "UNITY is our Bi-Word". BiPOL's next task was to plot our bisexual visibility actions for the Democratic Convention and homophobic fundamentalist preacher Jerry Falwell's Brotherhood Family Forum Conference.

I could feel the energy whirling around the room. Alan talked about how he had once run for Vice-President at a previous national convention; he wasn't successful — but the fifteen minutes on the convention floor for your nomination speech and free national television and radio time were the point!

Still laughing I wiped the tears away from my eyes and felt myself ride a full-on roller coaster adrenaline rush when Alan talked about how BiPOL could capitalize on the national media and get even more visibility by running "Lani for Vice President". The serious tone in his voice and the twinkle in his eyes alerted me. He was already ten steps ahead of us, scheming to throw my hat into the ring! The candidacy was a foregone conclusion. BiPOL decided to officially put forth a candidate for Vice President to run with Walter Mondale.

"I am also the mother of an 18 year-old son and am terrified that, if elected, Ronald Reagan will get us into a war."



Lani & Danielle

"Lani Ka'ahumanu – an ex-housewife mother of two from San Mateo, a mixed heritage lesbian-identified bisexual feminist" – would compete with Geraldine Ferraro and then-Mayor Diane Feinstein for the Vice-Presidential nomination of the Democratic Party. I would be the first Hawaiian and out bisexual running for a major office. The purpose would be to get as much bisexual media visibility as possible. By the end of the meeting Alan was talking about picking up the official petition papers and writing a check for the filing fees.

The field was rough that year – Walter was courting many women for his running mate – Feinstein and Ferraro were two of his top choices. BiPOL sent out a press release to all major papers announcing our Vice Presidential candidate's press conference. To my utter amazement the press arrived at Moscone² at the appointed time. There I was talking with the San Francisco Examiner, and several other big city newspaper reporters. "Ms. Ka'ahumanu, why are you running for Vice President?" "Yeah," I thought to myself, "what am I doing?" I was scared to death – but I heard myself say, "I am running because I am very concerned about the homophobic Falwellian agenda of the religious right. I want time on the floor of the convention to speak about the civil rights of bisexual, lesbian, and gay people. No one else will bring our issues forward at this convention. I am also the mother of an 18-year-old son and am terrified that, if elected, Ronald Reagan will get us into a war. In the 60s I was "Another Mother for Peace." I could not stand for this.

As this was going on, my BiPOL campaign advisors were handing out little pink baggies imprinted with big blue letters which, lined up vertically, spelled out BARF. The B was for Anita Bryant. The A was for Ruben Askew (the very homophobic governor of Florida at that time). The R was for Ronald Reagan, and the F for Jerry Falwell. I couldn't quite believe people were taking us seriously.

The next day back behind the counter fixing lattes and wearing my official purple T-shirt with "Ka'ahumanu for Vice President" blazoned across the front, I screamed when I read a little two-inch story in the SF Examiner which read: "Terrified woman handing out air-sickness bags announces candidacy." I

didn't know whether to laugh or cry. It did go on to say "bisexual", so we were on a roll. Business at The Rose had tripled. The whole city was jumpin' and bisexuals were right in there with the rest of them.

By that time Walter had already chosen Geraldine and the necessary 200 delegate signatures had been collected. However, the Ka'ahumanu campaign committee were workin' our butts off in our purple campaign T-shirts. We went to every delegate party, all the tourist spots, including 18th and Castro, and the various caucuses to lobby delegates for their signatures. Alan and Bob were my experienced Campaign Managers. Arlene, Autumn, my daughter Dannielle, and Bill were political advisors. We told the mostly tipsy or full-on drunk delegates we wanted to address the issue of sexual orientation, civil rights and families from the convention floor. My campaign slogan was "Tippecanoe and Ka'ahumanu too!" We were on the campaign trail collecting signatures morning, noon and night for a week!

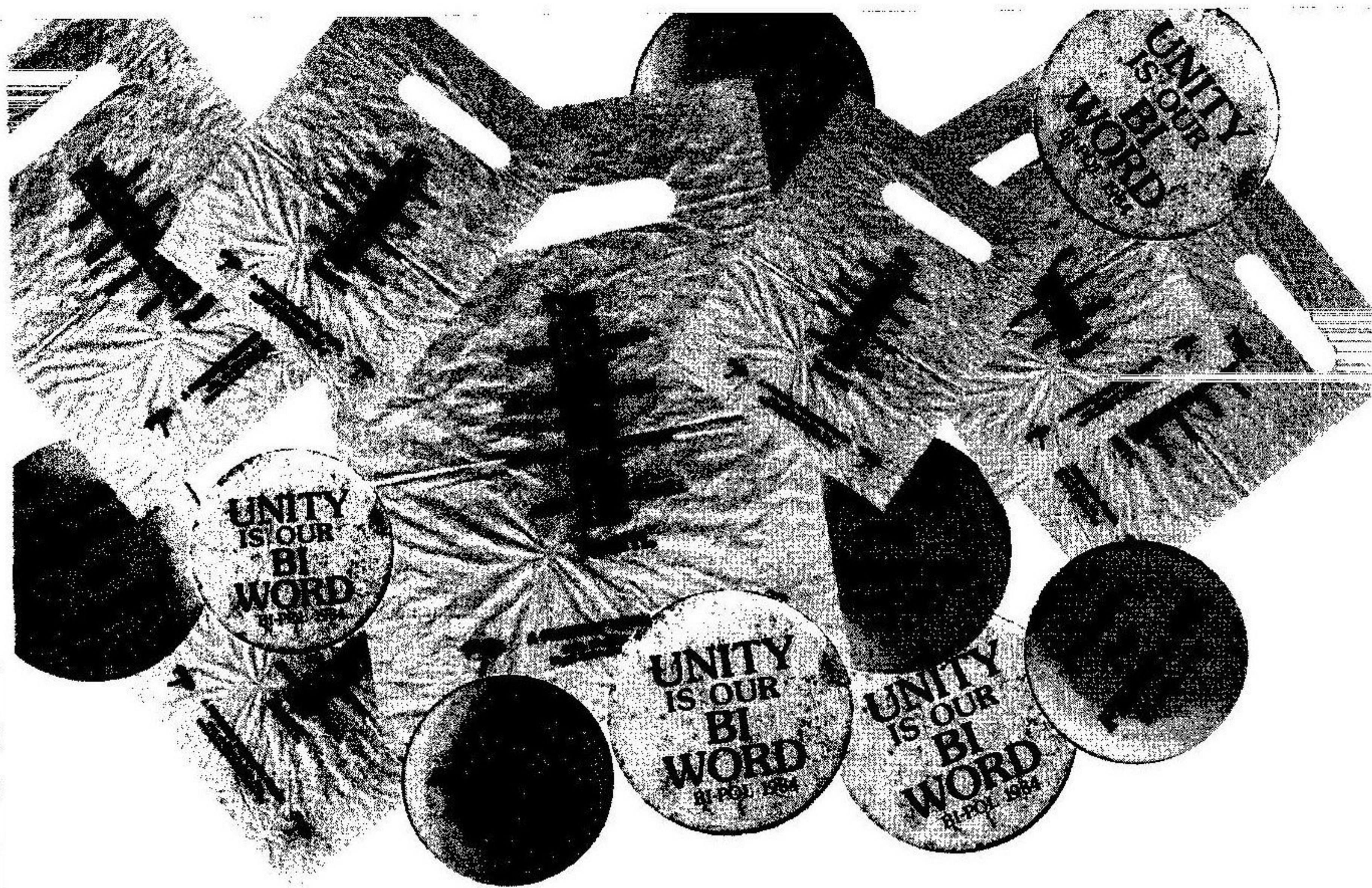
We collected 253 delegate signatures; 53 more than we needed just in case some of the people who signed were alternate and not full-fledged delegates. Alan delivered them to the Democratic National Committee (DNC) office at the San Francisco Hilton early in the morning at the appointed time.

We met for breakfast across the street to wait for the official count. My head was spinning. I had watched Jesse Jackson's speech the previous night. The convention center was so enormous he was just a speck behind the podium. I physically shook with fear at the thought of actually speaking at the microphone on that very same stage. What had I been talked into? Bisexual

visibility by any means necessary! Yikes!

To make a long story short, we were told that 70 of our signatures were invalid so we wouldn't get the time on the floor. We were outraged (but I have to say honestly I was a little bit relieved). It was about 10:30 a.m. when we got the news. The day's activities were beginning at noon so most people were already at Moscone. Alan, Bill, Arlene, Bob and I marched right up to the computer room of the DNC on the fifth floor of





SOME OF THE FIRST BI PARAPHERNALIA

the Hilton. We were a rag-tag grouping, in our purple "Ka'ahumanu" T-shirts, yet no one stopped us or gave us a second look.

We found the books listing the names and signatures of delegates and their alternates. Within a few minutes we discovered eight "invalidated" signatures were official delegates! We realized they didn't want us on the floor. Bob sat down at the typewriter and immediately began writing a press release. I nosed around further and found a letter on DNC stationery with the official count. Geraldine and another woman who was "running on a solar energy platform" got 200+ signatures. I was listed third. I stole the letter and also took pictures documenting our discoveries. Arlene, Bill and Alan continued to pour over the books. A young woman and man appeared and asked what we were doing there. We told them our story and showed them what we had uncovered. They said we needed to talk with the head of the DNC and insisted we leave. By that time everyone who was anyone (except for us!) was at the Moscone Convention Center. We, the BiPOL Five, refused to leave until security arrived. Alan stayed behind, arguing that our rights had been violated and the democratic process had been purposefully obstructed.

Wow! In that two week period after the Parade in 1984 BiPOL orchestrated several press conferences, a short TV interview for a Chicago morning talk show with me, "the can-

didate," and my 17-year-old daughter, Dannielle, and a spectacular, rowdy, highly visible, press-attended, street theatre demo titled "Stop the 1984 Falwellian Agenda," a "La Cage Au Falwell" sexual healing of the Moral Majority. As the show tune "I Am What I Am" blasted from the tape deck, we sprinkled fairy dust glitter on the side walk in front of the Holiday Inn where Jerry Falwell was holding his "pro-family" openly anti-gay "Brotherhood Family Forum." We also coordinated a Bi Brunchtime Rally, the first bisexual rights rally in San Francisco (and maybe anywhere). There were nine speakers and live entertainment. We sold our very hot "Faeries for Ferraro" button.

BiPOL ended up getting media coverage for bisexuals in Newsweek magazine and the daily Los Angeles, Chicago, San Francisco and New York newspapers. In several convention political cartoons showing delegates there would be a bisexual sign among the anti-nuke, peace, and union signs. Our visibility campaign was a great success. Life behind the counter at The Rose calmed down some after the Democrats left town but 1984 wasn't over...

1. Now Josie's Cabaret and Juice Joint
2. Moscone Convention Center is San Francisco's largest convention center.

THE PROTOCOLS

FICTION

by Naomi Seidman

These days, Scooter's the regular one-man complaint department on the Plaza. Anyone's got a problem, with Israel bombing Lebanon, the Bible, all the fuckin' holocaust movies on TV, communism, Hollywood, New York, lawyers, he's the one they go to. He can't take it anymore he says, while I watch the girls go by. Friday before school starts, and this year they all look like they're going to a party. Scooter goes on, about you-Obadiah and you-Jesse, passing me the cigarette while the girls go by in these dresses they're all wearing this year, little tiny flowers, scoop necks, flaring out over hips. Scooter says it's because they don't understand the hermeneutic principle. The Bible, you got to understand, goes all the way back to Gilgamesh. And Paul was the one who started it all with that shit about we're all one in the eyes of God. Scooter hates that shit. And at least he's coping with his heritage, he's not denying anything. They've got these clunky shoes I'm noticing, black with thick soles and black heels. It's getting hotter and hotter really for black girls, I'm thinking. I'm even wondering, why would I feel like one of those flowy dresses.

"Let's do it," I break in.

Scooter stops. "Let's do what?"

"Let's be Elders of Zion." I'm still looking at some girl, just a second longer than I need to. It's complicated. Partly I'm paying Scooter back for how he's always talking about boys in front of me like what am I, chopped liver? Some people think I'm a pretty attractive person, I'll have you know. Partly I'm looking at girls because I'm the partner in perversion. Partly I'm just looking at girls.

"Ooh," Scooter shakes his head and screws up his face. "I hate you for saying that." But he's wrong. I can see, even though I'm patting the bushes in back of the stone ledge where we're sitting, because all of a sudden I'm very tired. I get that way sometimes. It's hot and there's all these people out there and my bed seems about a million miles away. These pigeons are jumping down the wide bottom steps, they look so fat. Not too far away, I hear the word "soup" and this circle of normal, biology grad-student-looking people start laughing at the same time and it seems to me inconceivable or maybe just amazing that someone could say anything to make a whole bunch of people laugh that way. Scooter is still shaking his head over my head, whatever it was and then she walks up, long narrow girl, incredibly narrow, looking straight at me.

"Lois," I state. She is, at the moment, The Most Beautiful Woman I know, but it took me a year to remember her name. It doesn't go with her. I'm relieved to see she's looking a little less beautiful. There's just so much I can take.

"Sandy," she says back, in just the same tone of voice. She's different from the others. A black shirt through which I can see a lacy bra. She's looking at sunburned, really rather handsome though I suppose maybe a little crazed from one point of view Scooter, but I'm thinking, no big deal, I'll just introduce them and let the whatevers fall where they may. But I don't even get a chance to.

"Say you hate me," he starts.

"What," she says, a little fake. I hate this part.

"I don't trust you unless you say you hate me," he rattles off.

She looks at me, but I just shrug so she goes back to him. "Oh. You're one of those. I know about you." I don't like her so much all of a sudden.

"Say you hate me."

"Okay. Can I talk to Sandy?"

Scooter is sliding backward along the stone ledge. "I'm going to have to go away. I don't think I can trust you."

Lois looks at me. "Did you say I hate you?"

"Yeah, sure, three or four times a day," I lie. The rules are, you only have to say it once, and I said it so long ago I don't remember what kind of fuss I kicked up, if any.

"You don't have to mean it," Scooter points out helpfully.

"I hate you."

He waits. I'm wondering if he'll let her get away with it.

"I hate you."

"Yeah! That's it! Right on!" He's nodding so hard, he's kind of bouncing on our stony seat.

"Now can I talk to Sandy?"

"Sure, absolutely, go right ahead."

Lois turns to me elaborately. "So what are you doing? Are you still at San Francisco State?"

"Yeah," I'm still patting the bushes. I swear they're thick enough to take a nap on. "You?"

"Oh, just going to school, you know."

"What do you study?" I'm sure I must have asked her this before, but every time I see her I forget.

"Undecided, I study undecided."

"Great, that's really great," Scooter's enthusiastic. He's really a polite guy, he's trying hard to show he's just another person, now, talking about majors with the best of them but she's backing off, turning around and mumbling something about bread and registration.

Scooter and me just sit and watch her walking up those steps. The sun is going down a little and her skirt is all shiny and smooth, it, you can see her legs all the way up to where they come together. We're still watching when she gets the heavy door open. I wait till it closes behind her, catching the blaze of the sun, and then I stretch back onto the bushes like I've been waiting to do, sinking a little but only a little and it's really nice and springy, bouncing a little and it smells good.

"Remember Jefferson," I ask Scooter. "She's Jefferson's girlfriend."

"Ooh, I hate you-Jefferson," Scooter frowns. "All those positives. Always looking for some underdog to be progressive about. Weird shit. I don't trust you-Jefferson at all."

"Mmm. The overdog," I suggest. My eyes are shut now.

"What were we talking about?" Scooter asks.

"We should do it," I bring up out of some dark inside, but for a second I forget what it was I thought we should do.

WHAT YOUR MOTHER NEVER TOLD YOU

And Baby Makes Four:

Dear Auntie Margo,

About four years ago Julie and I were in a relationship. She wanted to have a baby and I was also very excited about being a mom. We talked about insemination. However, she is bi and decided to get pregnant with her friend Zach. I felt upset about this, but we worked it out, and she didn't continue the sexual relationship after she got pregnant. Afterwards, Zach disappeared from the scene. Julie and I have a wonderful daughter, now 3 years old, and I feel I'm just as much her mother as Julie is. Although Julie and I broke up about a year ago, we're still good friends and I continue to be Sima's "mom" and spend a lot of time with her. Meanwhile, Zach has come back around wanting to be Sima's dad, which is fine with Julie. He is a good guy but I don't want to be replaced because I adore Sima and intend to be her other mom as she grows up. I don't know if we can count on Zach since he wasn't around her first 2 years. Any ideas to help sort out this situation?

Laura

Dear Laura,

Children can and do thrive in non-traditional families and can have many loving adults in their lives. Sima needs to be the number one person so she gets the love and security she needs.

Assuming Zach has love and good will he should be a part of her life. Hopefully, he wants to assume some responsibility without wanting to replace you. Only time will tell if Zach is around for the long term. You, Julie, and Zach need to talk together and sort out everyone's feelings and insecurities, perhaps with a therapist, so as not to juggle Sima



around with unresolved issues.

The three of you also need to work out practical considerations such as time and schedules. Is it possible that sometimes all four of you can enjoy time together?

You don't state whether there are any financial concerns, but the three of you may need to discuss what each of you can contribute to Sima's financial well-being.

It would be good if you and Julie consult with an attorney to set up a legal agreement that you will have custody of Sima, in the event that Julie can't take care of her. Otherwise, Zach or the grandparents could get custody which might leave you out.

Since Julie has the primary responsibility for Sima, she may have the final say on these issues. Hopefully, all of you will create a situation with Sima's well-being as the ultimate goal.

Auntie Margo

To Cut or Not To Cut:

Dear Uncle Bill,

Recently, on vacation in New York, I chanced to find *Anything That Moves* on a newsstand. It was Issue #5, and I was disappointed to read "Ask Auntie Margo and Uncle Bill" passing on questionable information about circumcision for males.

It is a controversial issue, but there is solid evidence on the side that it is more than advisable; that there are clear medical advantages to it, and that not having it makes a man vulnerable to problems. If not done in infancy and postponed to adulthood when problems have rendered it necessary, it is indeed a painful experience. I count my blessings that I had it done in infancy, as several adult friends have endured it in later life and while glad that it was done, remember a bad experience.

The foreskin is there at the time of birth, but it is not vital to keep it. Uncircumcised males are at least 10 times more likely to have urinary tract infections, kidney infections, and penile cancer, as well as sexually transmitted diseases such as genital warts, gonorrhea, and syphilis. The foreskin can allow viruses and bacteria to survive longer on the skin, especially in heterosexuals. AIDS has been found to occur more often in the uncircumcised. Other stud-

ies have shown women are more likely to contract cervical cancer and other infections when their husbands are uncircumcised.

After 16 years of opposition to the operation, the American Academy of Pediatrics reconsidered.

On the pleasure side, *Sex Over 40* magazine reported studies saying that 3/4 of women preferred circumcised penises for intercourse, visual aesthetics, touch, and fellatio. The look of a penis fully exposed delineates its shape appealingly, soft or hard.

Very truly yours,
R. Anthony

Dear R. A.:

Thanks for your letter, for it provides an opportunity to correct a number of commonly-held misunderstandings about the circumcision issue.

Anti-circumcision activists¹ maintain that "nature intended the penis to have a foreskin. The inherent benefits of the foreskin for the majority of males far outweigh any potential health risks to a small minority. The penis doesn't need to be 'improved upon'."

I spoke with Marilyn Milos, R.N., of the National Organization of Circumcision Information Resource Centers (NOCIRC), who says that the United States has the highest circumcision rate and the highest AIDS rate of any first-world nation. Other STD's (sexually transmitted diseases) have reached epidemic proportions in the United States as well. Based on this, I must disagree with your statements about STD and AIDS frequency.

You state that "the foreskin can allow viruses and bacteria to survive longer on the skin, especially in heterosexuals." This presumes that men can't provide hygiene for themselves, as we do every time we brush our teeth. We don't pull healthy teeth instead of cleaning them. Regarding smegma, females produce more than intact males. Daily washing of the penis confers the same hygiene benefits as circumcision without the trauma, and it's easy to wash after sex; most men I know do this anyway,

circumcised or not. And regarding heterosexuals being at higher risk in this regard, I'm afraid I don't understand what you mean. In any case, the poor hygiene practices of a few do not justify circumcising newborn males. You also neglect to mention that the recovery period in infants can last up to 14 days, during which the baby urinates and defecates into the raw wound, risking infection.

There are other risks, including hemorrhage, mutilation, and even death. Serious complications occur with one in every 500 circumcisions. By contrast, penile cancer is rare, striking 1 in 100,000 mostly elderly intact men, and circumcised men get it, too. Urinary tract infection affects intact boys at the rate of 1.5%, or one in 66. Females have a much higher UTI rate than males, and the condition is easily treatable with antibiotics.

Doctors are slow to abolish a practice generating millions of dollars annually. Parents, ignorant about the normal penis, worry that a foreskin could pose problems. It could, but so could having breasts. Breast cancer strikes one woman in nine, yet we don't amputate healthy breast tissue from infant females as prevention. The point is, traditional circumcision is a painful, unnecessary surgery that is nonconsensual in the case of infants.

Eighty-five percent of the world's men are uncut, and Americans are the only people who routinely circumcise the majority of infant males for nonreligious reasons. Many countries who used to circumcise, such as England, have ended the practice.

The statistic you cite about uncircumcised men being ten times more likely to develop infections and cancer is from a refuted study, according to Ms. Milos. Penile cancer can occur on a circumcision scar — and so can herpes. Genital warts occur on circumcised guys, so cutting foreskin is no prevention for that, either. Finally, Finland has a lower penile cancer rate than the U.S., and no circumcision.

Regarding *Sex over 40*, the National

Organization to Halt the Abuse and Routine Mutilation of Males (NOHARMM)'s brochure² states: "As a man ages, he loses penile sensitivity. Circumcision compounds this problem by robbing the penis of not only the sensory receptor organ itself, but also of the effect of foreskin on retaining glans sensitivity. Circumcision makes it more difficult to achieve satisfactory stimulation."

You believe that the foreskin is unnecessary. I encourage you to check out the sources listed below for a different point of view. Again, thanks for writing.

Sincerely,
Uncle Bill

Sources

¹"And suddenly men began to scream: why men are organizing to end infant circumcision" brochure prepared by NOHARMM, date unknown. For more information, write: P.O. Box 460795, San Francisco, CA 94146

²"Circumcision: Why?" brochure prepared by NOCIRC, 9/92 version. For more information, write: P.O. Box 2512 San Anselmo, CA 94979

Much of the information asserted in my response is backed up with scientific studies cited in "Circumcision: A Medical or a Human Rights Issue?", by Marilyn Fayre Milos, R.N., and Donna Macris, CNM, MSN, in *Journal of Nurse-Midwifery*, Vol. 37, No. 2, March/April 1992. Write to NOCIRC for a copy of this article.

What your mother probably never told you was that Auntie Margo & Uncle Bill are available to answer all your questions on sex, love, relationships, etc. Send them c/o BABN, 2404 California St. #24, SF, CA 94115. We will only use your initials or a pen name, so don't worry, your mother won't find out...

Auntie Margo (aka Margo Rila, Ed. D.) is a sexologist, educator, and counselor. She is the Training Coordinator for San Francisco Sex Information; on the faculty of the Institute for the Advanced Study of Human Sexuality; founding member of the Bi Center in San Francisco, and of BiTE (Coalition of Bisexual Therapists & Educators)

Uncle Bill (aka Bill Brent) edits and publishes two sex-oriented publications. *Black Sheets* is a bi-oriented 'zine for kinky, queer, intelligent, and irreverent folk. *The Black Book* is a 196-page, illustrated resource guide for the erotic explorer. Bill has also worked as a switchboard supervisor with San Francisco Sex Information.

THE EVOLUTION OF THE BISEXUAL MOVEMENT

by Liz A. Highleyman

THE BIRTH OF THE BI MOVEMENT

The contemporary bisexual movement began in the early 1970s. Before then, communities existed that included a large proportion of bisexually-behaving people: utopian or anarchist sex-radical communities, and some communities of artists and writers, such as Bloomsbury, at the turn of the century. But bisexuality as an identity was uncommon, and organization on the basis of bisexuality was unknown.

The earliest bisexual groups developed in large U.S. cities. Perhaps the first was the National Bisexual Liberation Group, which was founded in New York City in 1972. Many participants in the early bi groups were connected to predominantly heterosexual "swinger" or communal "free love" subcultures. Other bisexuals were associated with gay liberation; both the early bi movement and the early gay liberation movement were part of the "sexual revolution." The early bi movement viewed sexual liberation as an integral part of overall social change; sexuality and politics were seen as closely interrelated. Sexuality and gender roles were thought to be fluid (some even believed that "after the revolution" everyone would be bisexual and androgynous), and the movement advocated free choice in the areas of sex and relationships.

A new bi consciousness developed throughout the 1970s. This development was influenced by the shift toward personal politics that followed the end of the Vietnam war, and by a cultural emphasis on paradigm-smashing and self-discovery (often aided by mind-altering drugs). This was the era of "bisexual chic," with a rash of articles in the popular press about bisexuality. Bisexuality came into fashion as high-profile rock stars and artists such as David Bowie, Elton John and Patti Smith publicly proclaimed their bisexuality and presented gender-bending images. However, the media remained focused on the club scene and the antics of celebrities, and did not delve into the intricacies of bisexuality as an identity or the politics of sexual liberation.

As the 1970s waned, many gay liberationists began to adopt an identity-based model of sexual orientation. The increasing conservatism of the times, as well as burnout from a decade of activism, helped motivate a shift in focus from social revolution (of which sexual revolution was just one piece) to an emphasis on assimilation. Along with this shift came the idea that homosexuals were a different type of person than heterosexuals, and because homosexuals couldn't help being the way they were, their integration into mainstream society should not be hindered. As the focus on gayness as an identity became more prevalent, many bisexuals faced exclusion from gay and lesbian groups because their attractions and behavior did not

always fall within the prescribed identity boundaries. Bisexuals were resented for wanting to have "the best of both worlds," traitors to the cause, closet-cases who refused to accept their true (presumably gay or lesbian) identity, or bandwagon-jumpers who were destined to retreat back to their havens of heterosexuality when things got rough.

During the 1980s, many bisexuals remained allied with gay and lesbian communities (often masquerading as gay men or lesbians). Many others, however, sought to create specifically bisexual communities and organizations. The first groups devoted specifically to bisexual political activism were formed, including San Francisco's BiPOL (1983), Boston's BiCEP (1988) and New York's BiPAC. Bisexual groups began to connect with each other and larger entities grew up such as the East Coast Bisexual Network (1985) and the Bay Area Bisexual Network (1987). The 1980s also saw the development of bisexual groups outside of the U.S., including the formation of groups in London, Edinburgh, and Wellington, New Zealand.

While the groups of the 1970s were often predominantly male, a notable shift occurred in the 1980s. Bisexual women had begun to experience increasing alienation from lesbian communities throughout the 1970s and 1980s, in part due to a redefinition of the concept of lesbianism. Previously a woman was defined as a lesbian if she loved and was committed to women; during the 1980s, lesbianism came to be defined more in terms of not loving or having sexual relationships with men. Some lesbians had had negative experiences working with heterosexual feminists in groups such as NOW, and were determined to form lesbian-only communities. Many of the bi groups begun in the 1980s were founded on feminist principles and led by women who had previously been part of these lesbian communities.

AIDS also had a profound effect on bisexual communities in the 1980s. Bi men were stigmatized as transmitters of HIV from the gay community to the "general population." Many men who had been leaders in bi communities became ill or died. Many other bi men and women turned their attention to AIDS-related activism and service. In the late 1980s, as awareness of AIDS among women increased, bisexual women were blamed for bringing HIV into lesbian communities. These developments spurred discussions about the distinction between sexual behavior and sexual identity (for example, many self-identified bisexual women did not have sex with men, while many self-identified lesbians did). Many bisexual women thought it unfair that they were ostracized from lesbian communities for being honest about their dual attractions while some self-professed lesbians retained their position in those communities by keeping their relationships with men secret.

BUILDING A NATIONAL BISEXUAL MOVEMENT

In 1987 a call was put out to create a bisexual contingent to take part in the 1987 March on Washington for Gay and Lesbian Rights. Seventy-five people participated in what proved to be the first nationwide bisexual gathering in the U.S. Discussion began about creating a national bisexual organization, networking continued following the march, and the North American Bisexual Network was born. In June 1990, BiPOL organized the first U.S. National Bisexual Conference in San Francisco, which brought together over 400 attendees. At this conference the NABN was formalized as the North American Multicultural Bisexual Network (NAMBN), which, after a year of discussion and re-organization was renamed BiNet: the Bisexual Network of the U.S.A. The second U.S. National Conference on Bisexuality and a meeting of BiNet took place in April 1993 in conjunction with the March on Washington for Lesbian, Gay and Bi Equal Rights and Liberation.

The pioneer organizers of the bisexual movement in the 1980s have been joined in the 1990s by a new generation of bi activists, many with histories and goals quite different from those of the previous decade. In the past several years students and youth have become increasingly active in the bisexual movement, and as many of these young peoples' first conscious sexual identity was bisexual, they may feel less tied to either the gay and lesbian community or to the "presumed-heterosexual" mainstream. Many young bi activists identify with the "queer movement" which began in the late 1980s with the formation of groups such as ACT UP and Queer Nation. With its emphasis on diversity, radical politics and direct action, this movement has galvanized many people who had become disillusioned with the assimilationism and apoliticism of existing gay and bi organizations. Some segments of the queer movement have emphasized the inclusion of bisexuals, transgendered people and other sexual minorities, and numerous campus organizations now include bisexuals and other sexual minorities by name.

Another trend within the bisexual movement is the increased participation of people from a wide variety of alternative subcultures, including radical political milieus, the pagan community, several music/art scenes, computer hackers, and sexual minorities such as polyamorists and s/m aficionados.

The late 1980s and early 1990s saw a burst of bisexual culture, including a substantial increase in the publication of books about bisexuals and bisexuality, the emergence of magazines devoted to bisexuality, and a myriad of appearances by bisexuals on radio and television talk shows. Universities have begun to include bisexuality in their gay and lesbian studies courses, and a few have introduced courses specifically devoted to bisexuality. National and international bi networking and community building has been boosted by the electronic computer mailing lists such as BISEXU-L, BIFEM-L, the Usenet soc.bi news-

group, and numerous private bulletin boards. This increased visibility of bisexuality, along with popular celebrities from Madonna and Nirvana declaring attraction to both sexes, indicate that we may have embarked on a new era of "bisexual chic."

In 1994 there are many issues on the bisexual agenda. There is a growing emphasis on multicultural organizing and activism, and many are working actively to increase the participation of people of color in bisexual communities. Transgendered and differently-gendered people have long been active within bisexual communities, but today their concerns are receiving increased attention, especially from bisexuals whose goal is to challenge rigidly polarized notions of sex/gender and sexual orientation. There is tension between the desire to proudly claim a bisexual identity and build strong bisexual communities, and the desire to lessen society's divisive emphasis on labels and categories.

The bisexual movement in the past has almost as a matter of course considered itself closely allied with the gay and lesbian movement. Yet after continued resistance by gay men and lesbians to bisexual inclusion, some bisexuals have begun to question whether bi resources are best spent pleading for inclusion from the gay and lesbian movement. The idea that bisexuals would be better served by an independent bi movement that can focus on bisexual issues — whether or not they coincide with the issues of gay men and lesbians — is one theory. Another is that bisexuals should work toward the creation of a broad-based sexual and gender liberation movement — harking back to movement of the 1970s — that includes bisexuals and all other sexual minorities as equal partners.

The one thing that can be said with certainty as we move toward the new century is that the bisexual movement will continue to grow and evolve. Bisexuals have never been known to remain static!

There is a tension between the desire to proudly claim a bisexual identity and build strong bisexual communities, and the desire to lessen society's divisive emphasis on labels and categories.

Liz A. Hightleyman is a writer, activist and AIDS educator whose interests include sexuality, gender and radical politics. She has been a member of the Boston bisexual community for several years, but by the time you read this she will have completed her public health degree and moved to San Francisco.

Parts of this text will appear in The Concise Encyclopedia of Homosexuality edited by S. Donaldson (Random House, forthcoming) and in an anthology on bisexual politics edited by Naomi Tucker (Hayworth, forthcoming).

THE ANTI-QUEER ROUND-UP

by Mark Silver

Sure, Tom Hanks got to play a Person With AIDS, a million queers arrived in New York City in June, and Apple Computer stands up for domestic partner benefits. But these gains do not offset a sense of growing unease.

While a majority of people seem to tolerate us, how many truly accept us? They still do not want us talking to their children, and do not want to share a table with us. Certain folks are being quite vocal about it in Nevada, Arizona, Missouri, Oregon, Michigan and Idaho. These states currently have initiatives, as did Florida until that state's supreme court knocked it down, either constitutional amendments or statutes that promote hatred. Listen to this excerpt from the Missouri initiative: "... homosexual, lesbian, or bisexual activity, conduct, or orientation, or any other sexual orientation, conduct, or practices shall not constitute or otherwise be the basis of or entitle any person or class of persons to have or claim any minority status, quota preferences, protected status, or claim of discrimination."

"One of the struggles is just waking people up," says Cindy Able, an out bisexual and chair of Citizens for Florida's Future (CFF). "The state-wide initiative was struck down as unconstitutional, but the radical right is trying to get two similar things passed in Alachua County. They are trying to get the human rights ordinance repealed that includes sexual orientation, and they are trying to pass an initiative that would make it impossible for sexual orientation to ever be included again."

Floridians United Against Discrimination, the group that had been fighting the now-defunct initiative, is being dissolved. According to Able, it will be replaced by CFF, which will be organized as a political action committee. "We will be doing education to know what the right's real agenda is, to support communities under attack by helping to develop strategies, and to serve as a statewide resource and have a long range place," explains Able. "We want to work with national groups and local communities, very much a grass roots organization to take pro-active measures."

The radical right has been extremely persistent with their agenda, and crafty as well. The fact that Florida's state-wide initiative was overturned is a serious cause for celebration. But the struggle is not nearly over, because the right has turned their efforts towards local communities.

David Weeda is a gay Missouri activist on the coordinat-

I have been an activist...for years, and I can't name a single bisexual.

ing and campaign committees of Show Me Equality, Missouri's anti-initiative coalition. "They [the radical right] don't care if they win. They would like it if it passed, but they are using this the same way we are: to energize, organize, and fund raise."

"Attitudes have been changing, however, which is perhaps what has sparked some of the radical right's aggression," explains Linda Shapanka, campaign coordinator for the Michigan Campaign for Human Dignity. "A national poll by the Human Rights Campaign Fund shows that if people know someone queer, they don't vote for anti-queer initiatives. People don't understand that in 99% of the country, you can lose your job if you are gay. The focus groups we've been doing have been homogeneous groups, and we've been listening behind the one-way glass to the homophobic statements some of these people make, but even the homophobic groups will stop and say that losing your job because you are gay is not fair." Shapanka tells us that this shows growing support for queer issues. "We had been initially depressed by the homophobia, but the facilitators we had were very positive, saying that this was fantastic, that just a couple of years ago you couldn't get a group of straight white men to sit down and talk about these issues, they would get up and walk out."

Weeda, also, has many anecdotes of support from surprising sources. "I just got off the phone with a young high school student from Belton, Missouri, who called to say that their chapter of Amnesty International wanted to fight the initiative. Also, four eighth-grade boys, each independent of the others, and all apparently straight, chose to do a report for a class on gay bashing as a social problem. We went down to a local gay bookstore to interview two survivors of bashings. This at a high school that had just been hit by racist and anti-semitic graffiti."

More needs to be done. Although much of our efforts and resources are being spent in lobbying and courting votes, necessary evils, direct action that forces those who hate us to know each of us personally remains the only tool that will ultimately change society.

"We in Arizona have no strong history of radical left activism. People tend to be more conservative than in the coastal communities." Peter Crozier is the president of the Lesbian and Gay Public Awareness Project, which is fighting the initiative in his state. "The climate here is such that with

more radical politics, you can measure the votes falling away. [However,] it is important to talk to neighbors and friends, family and coworkers about the initiatives. It's the usual activist nag about coming out of the closet. That sort of individual action is very effective."

One very important part of that action is coalition-building, which is an extremely effective strategy for derailing the attempts to turn various communities against us. "It's never too early to think about creating coalitions with the most diverse groups possible," Weeda advises. "Next time there is a lull in your community, instead of the next social activity, think about who you could meet with to build coalitions."

Shapanka agrees. "Go and find out what is important to these communities and offer yourselves as out gay people to help." She does caution against self-righteousness in this. "When homosexual people compare our struggle for gay rights now to the civil rights struggle of the sixties, we're in deep shit. How insulting, because how can we intimately know others' discrimination?" While anti-queer discrimination is just as insidious as racism, the question for queers is more often one of invisibility, while ethnic minorities are discriminated against for their appearance.

The bisexual community can appreciate the question of "passing" as well, to an even larger degree. While coming out as bisexual is almost always a difficult process, it is a vital one, especially for those of us who heavily identify with either the straight or gay communities — nearly all of us, for there are few

places which yet have a large, or supportive bisexual environment.

Although no one I spoke to was hostile to bisexuals, they also said, with the exception of Able who is bisexual, that they knew few, if any, out bisexuals involved in the organizing.

"There aren't many out bi's," said Weeda. "I have been an activist, and very visible, for years, and I can't name a single bisexual. And if there is a bisexual organization, I don't know what it is."

Crozier has had a similar experience. "Bisexuals and transgenders have a low profile in Phoenix. Very few openly identify as bisexual, and I am hard pressed to think of more than one or two bisexuals involved in the organizing, and no transgendered people at all." When asked why this was, Crozier replied, "I don't think there is hostility, but I don't know why they aren't visible. Bisexuals have been included in anti-discrimination laws, and have a stake in this struggle."

"I am bisexual," Able identifies herself. "Two on the board identify as bi, myself, and a man. There are transgendered people, but none we could identify who wanted to participate. We have had some difficulties reaching out."

These experiences are obviously a call to action for all of us. Bisexuals are explicitly named by the radical right, and are explicitly not named by a large portion of the gay left. If those of us who are more marginalized don't speak up for ourselves, who will?

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DEAR DR. M:

I am a graduate student in this division, and I am writing this letter to you to express my displeasure with the way you introduced the keynote speaker, Dr. R. K., at our recent divisional retreat. The problem lies in the way your jokes degraded certain classes of people. I am sure your remarks were made without conscious intent to harm, so I offer these comments in the spirit of education and consciousness raising.

Your slides showed Dr. K. participating in a Rocky Horror performance, involving cross-dressing and other "outrageous" attire. I understand that showing these slides was a good-natured attempt to poke some public fun at your friend and colleague, but the manner in which it was done insulted and hurt me. I am transgendered. Transgenderism encompasses transvestitism and transsexualism, and a whole spectrum of feelings and behaviors between and around those reference points. (It is entirely separate from issues of sexual orientation, since transgendered men and women come in all flavors -- gay, bi, and straight.) I fall somewhere on that spectrum, crossdressing on a regular basis in order to express and experience the female gender role (I am male.) in at least part of my life -- the part outside of school. I remain closeted in our department because of the very real fear that disclosure could seriously harm my career in science, and I unfortunately must pen this letter anonymously for the same reason.

Your remarks about Dr. K. derived their humor from their reliance on old stereotypes about gender, and about the nature of gender role transgression. You made it quite clear, unconsciously I am sure, that crossdressing is ludicrous, that transgendered people are ludicrous, that I am ludicrous. And that the bounds of "normal" human behavior preclude any gender ambiguity or natural variation. It is stereotypes such as these that for decades filled me with self-doubt, destroyed my self esteem, and delayed my spiritual and psychological maturation. Under such stereotypes, many other transgendered people, more closeted and anonymous than I, continue to suffer in silence. (Dr. K. himself might even be one of them, participating in Rocky Horror as his only possible "legitimate" public expression.) Each joke ridiculing transgender behavior is a direct slap in the face to transgendered people, adding another brick to the burden we carry.

Your remarks also stung at least two other classes of people. With one slide you joked that Dr. K. was in "the leather scene." I happen to know scientists who are in the leather scene, and they, like the transgendered, are legitimate and productive contributors to their fields. They, too, feel the need to remain closeted due to the prejudices of our society.

You also said that Dr. K. is "not only attractive to women" (dressed as a man) "but also to men" (showing him crossdressed as a woman), implying that the world contains only heterosexuals. Dr. K. was undoubtedly already attractive to women and men, long before he ever donned his first pair of panty hose. You told those gay and bi people in your audience that they don't exist. As I happen to be bi, I felt this sting as well. And, as I described above, the humor of this remark rested upon the idea that transgendered people are inherently ludicrous and unattractive.

As a final point, I want to assure you that my hurt is real, and not a matter of "political correctness." I am all for humor, and Lord knows my own circumstances have given me plenty of opportunities to laugh at myself. But that laughter never came until after I overcame the self-hatred instilled by a rigid and disapproving society, until after I learned to love and respect myself and live with dignity and self-esteem. This learning process is blocked daily for millions of people by the "humor" that ridicules them, reinforcing their isolation and oppression. I believe a more conscientious humor is possible, that can honor all people, poking fun at all our foibles without hurting each other.

I hope that these comments have been useful to you. If you feel any response is in order, you can write to me at the address below.

Sincerely,

S.

DEAR S.,

I would like to respond to your letter expressing your feelings about my "humorous" introduction of R. K. at the divisional retreat. On first reading, I was astonished that anyone could be so offended. However, on second, and subsequent readings, I began to think more deeply about your remarks, and I decided to respond to you directly on the assumption that your letter was heartfelt and sincere.

Let me begin by asserting, truthfully, and not for polemic points, that some of my most valued friends are gay, and I would never dream of saying - or implying - anything hurtful or insulting to or about them. But I confess that, until now, my sensitivity had not extended to this other segment of our society that you represent. For this I plead ignorance, but not malice. Your letter has touched me and caused me to rethink many things. I want to tender my honest apologies for the pain my remarks have inflicted upon you.

What you say about our societies' stereotypes and biases is undeniably true. The gay movement has begun - just barely - to break some of these taboos, and widen the sense of humanity beyond historical archetypes. I can tell you that my own native culture in China is far more intolerant of sexual ambiguity than are Western cultures, and so I have had to come a further distance than most in thinking through the emotional responses I learned at mother's knee. It has not been easy, and it seems that I have congratulated myself too soon. However, I assure you that your words have not fallen on deaf ears, and I appreciate your letter, not only for its content, but for the touching way you expressed your feelings without demonizing me. That was generous and kind of you given the way my remarks must have hurt you.

I can not claim to truly understand how you feel about your life for I have been spared the agonies you have been subjected to any more than you can understand how it feels to be a Chinese woman in a white, Western society. Nevertheless, a defining characteristic of human beings is our imagination that permits us to transcend our personal experience. That, after all, is the meat of literature. And to the extent that my imagination permits, my heart goes out to you in your isolation and self-doubt. I believe that our sexuality is as intrinsic a part of our being as our height or the color of our eyes, and not any easier to modify to cultural dictates. And it is almost certainly a biological fact that sexuality is a continuum, just as our height is a continuum between short and tall. I had no more right to ridicule anyone's sexual orientation than I would have to ridicule short or tall people.

You have indeed opened my eyes to a broader definition of humanity. Thank you.

Sincerely,

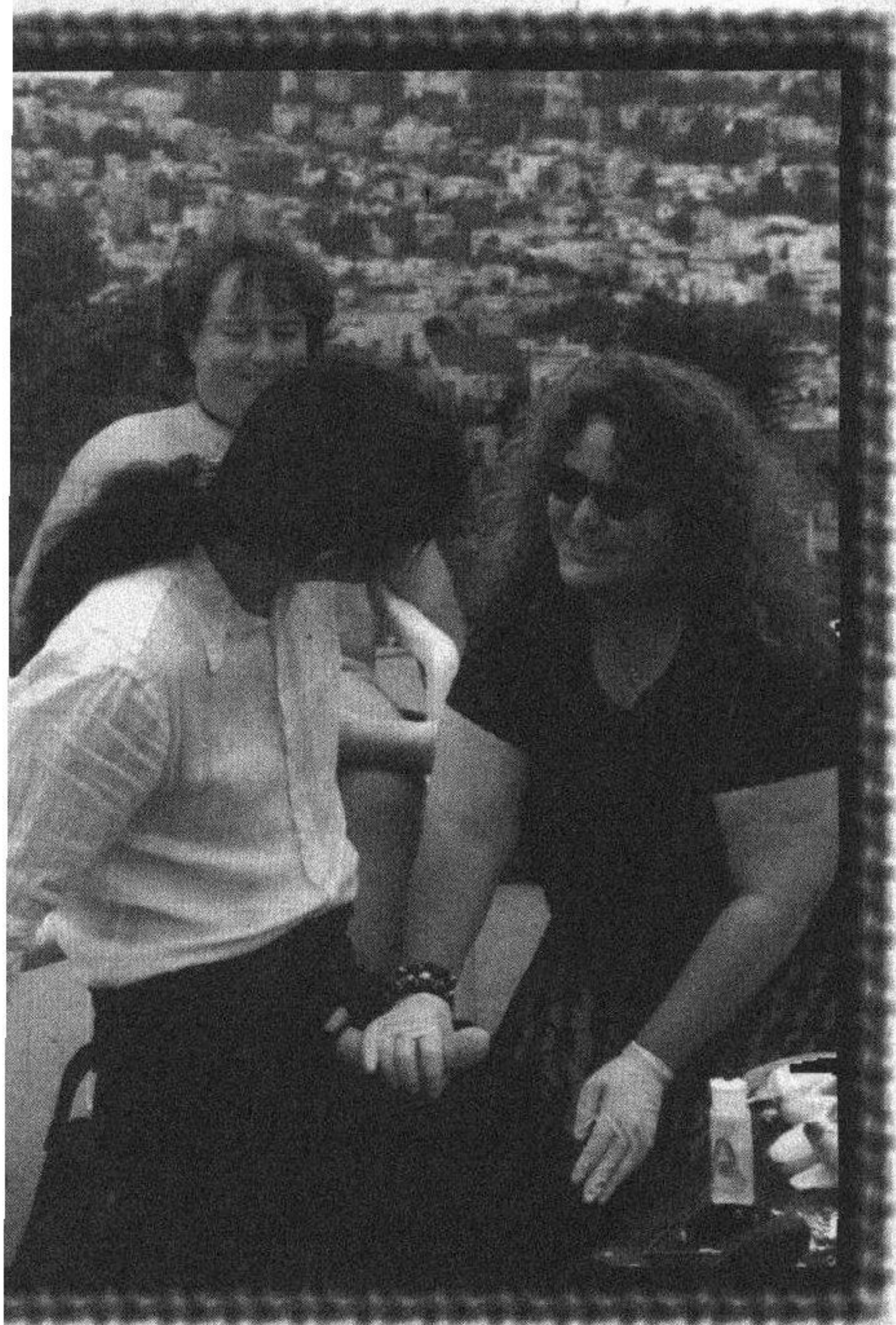
DR. H. P. M.

TALKING ABOUT IT

BY SUNSHINE DEWITT

PHOTOS BY AMY LARIMER





Ten bisexuals feel each other out on a touchy subject.

When some of us read an article in Ms. Magazine called "Where Do We Stand on Pornography," which appeared in the January/February issue, we were distraught. They were still saying that pornography is sick and sexist. No racy passages about lesbian B&D, no mention of that hot scene in "Cafe Flesh."

Nothing.

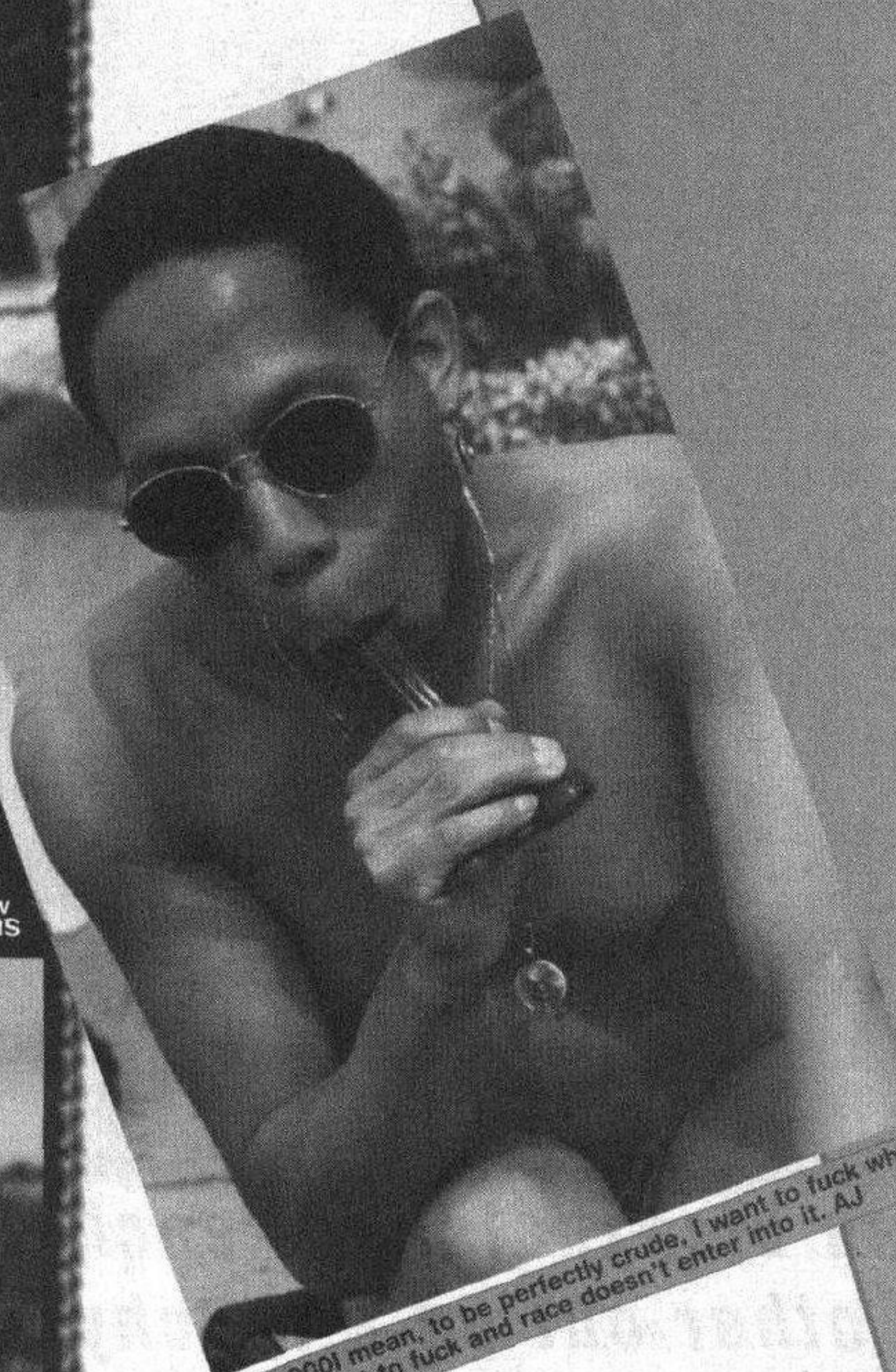
We wondered, how far has feminism really come in the past twenty years? Has the AIDS crisis challenged anyone to rethink their view of sex? Will Andrea Dworkin and her cohorts succeed in closing down every gay bookstore in the world? What is to become of sexual free speech in the coming millenium?

Over coffee one afternoon, we conceived of the idea to create our own porn round table. Why not reenact Ms. Magazine's discussion, only do it in the nude? suggested Mark Silver, our managing editor. We decided to bring together our own group, not of academics, but of sexual deviants and radicals.



I think the anti-porn approach is to say-
'let's get rid of the whores,' and
what I say is, let's start
respecting the
whores. KB

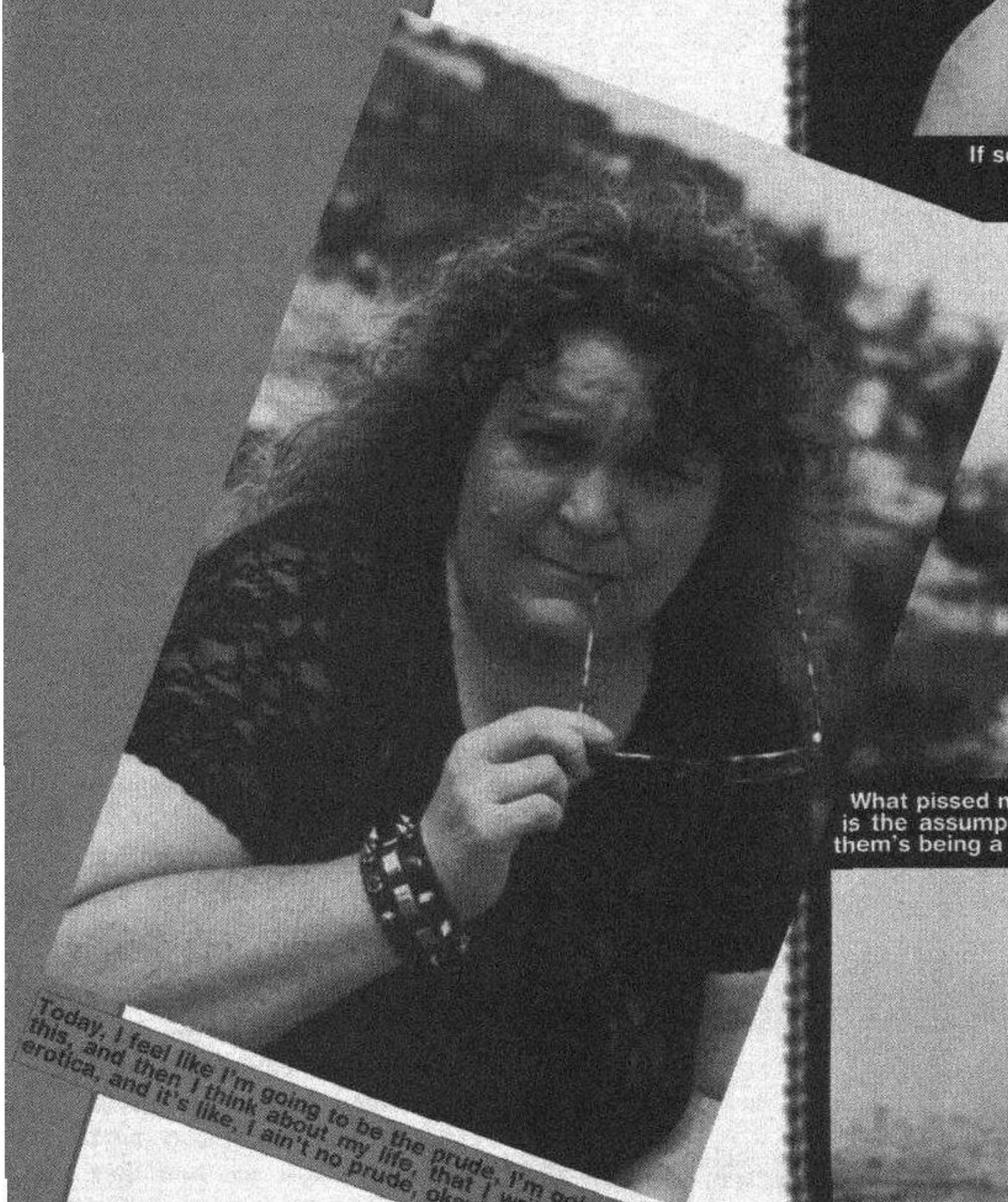
I think the first question is, what is
our response to *Ms.* magazine's rather
lukewarm discussion of pornography? It didn't
really plumb the depths of our plumbing, if you know
what I mean. MS



0000000I mean, to be perfectly crude, I want to fuck who I
want to fuck and race doesn't enter into it. AJ



If somebody wants to see my penis for ten dollars an hour, sure. GP



Today, I feel like I'm going to be the prude. I'm going to be this, and then I think about my life, that I write really hot erotica, and it's like, I ain't no prude, okay? LK



What pissed me off about Dworkin's definition of pornography is the assumption that in male on male pornography, one of them's being a woman! That's extremely heterosexist! CH



My mom thought that picture of kd lang and Cindy Crawford [Vanity Fair] was pornography. "But mom, they have their clothes on!" "But you can see the desire in their eyes." TF

As the sky blanched white from the sting of Charles Haines' whip, we congregated on the roof, discussing how to be a proper pervert. Makeup to be applied, lace and dildoes to be donned. Our resident Safer Sex Slut, Lani, showed us how to put on a condom using lips and tongue, and Charles continued with his whipping lessons. A.J. showed up in bikini underwear, flashing her new breasts. I put on my favorite purple strap-on, then covered it with a green condom. Mark Harris, lovingly stroking his banana, allowed Lani and Sunshine to lube it up. Mark Silver took notes with a handsome black butt plug. Gerard carefully fitted his cock ring onto his cock.

I turned on the tape recorder, and watched to see how the men and women around me were going to act. Mark Silver started out by asking, "what is our response to *Ms.* magazine's rather lukewarm discussion of pornography? My sense was that it didn't really plumb the depths of our, um, plumbing."

There was a pause, and then I stepped in and admitted that I was a little nervous. "This morning I was standing in front of the mirror trying to decide how much I could take off."

Lani Ka'ahumanu said she understood how I might be feeling. "When I began my work as Head Matron Slut at Lyon-Martin [women's health clinic], I had to go through some of that. I had to face some of my own shame, my own—walking into sex clubs and talking about sex. Now, in front of thirty coeds at Mills College, I can put a condom on with my mouth on a coed, without any problem, even though I'm older than some of their mothers."

I mentioned that, in a sense, we were creating a "pornography of our own," and wondered how others felt about this.

A.J. Davis spoke up. "This is the first time I've had nude pictures taken since I changed over. I wasn't quite sure what to expect for myself. I felt incredibly powerful sitting around flashing my breasts for all the Castro to see."

There were some appreciative nods and giggles. Did anyone else have that kind of expressive release? Lani didn't think that what we were doing had anything to do with pornography: "taking our clothes off today is not pornography. I'm not sure what pornography is—that's my confusion—but this isn't it."

Gerard Palmieri agreed that taking our clothes off doesn't have to mean anything in particular. Referring to his experience

as an art model, he said: "I've done it before. I mean, what's the difference between taking my clothes off for money, ten dollars an hour, which I've done before, and anything else. To me, it's like, if somebody wants to see my penis for ten dollars an hour, sure."

"As someone who has really thought about sex work as just a way to pay the rent," A.J. explained, "I certainly would say that I have to sit down and think about this more, because the issues I thought I would have, I don't."

Mark Silver: "The word 'pornography' itself sometimes seems to be some kind of flexible term. It's just like a negative shade you can throw on something when you want to put it in a bad light."

A.J. nodded. Why not talk about the kind of porn that we liked, that was fun and acceptable, like the sex scene in the film *The Hunger*? But so much pornography is nothing like that.

"My lover and I," she explained, "we were in a convenience store not too long ago, and they had all these various sex magazines, and we were there with a gay male friend, and he was

looking at his magazines and we were looking at ours. And it was very funny, because what passed for lesbian sex in some those magazines, at some level I found it very offensive as a lesbian-identified bisexual woman, but on another level, I found it hilarious, just because it's like, yeah, this is lesbian sex."

Terry Flamer, a twenty-three year-old bisexual woman who writes the youth column for *Anything That Moves*, had some things to say about her personal experiences with porn:

"It's interesting that my first experience with pornography was when I was very, very young and having brothers that had girlie magazines. And they'd be at school and I'd look at 'em, and I never, it never really did much for me, I was really young, maybe eight or nine, but the thing I noticed about it was how they would dissect women and that

bothered me. It still does. When I

think about one layout they had that was just different things, like hubcaps and fried eggs, but they would put women's breasts in the middle of these things as every day objects, and it was saying that these are the only parts we want to talk about right now, and that was disturbing. But watching couples engaged...was fine. I mean that didn't bother me at all—make me cringe or anything—but whenever I did look at a picture, I would see really bad jokes where they would objectify women in



This morning I was standing in front of the mirror trying to decide how much I could take off. SD

very dehumanizing ways that made me never want to see the magazine."

Okay, I had to say something. "I'm sometimes more surprised by the fact that I will look at really cheesy pornography and have that reaction: oh, this isn't real, and that's not what two women really do together, and blah blah blah, but I'm getting turned-on anyway." I looked to see if anyone wanted to sock me, then continued hurriedly, "—especially those blonde girls, man, with those big, silicone breasts, I mean if you had someone like that in real life maybe it would be weird, but, they're on the piece of paper, you don't have to talk to them, you don't have to cook them breakfast, and they're just so..."

Nobody disagreed. A.J. teased me a little about the fact that they have such long nails, like that would be "sca-a-a-ry!"

True enough. Mark Harris admitted, "*Hustler* really turns me on, there's no way around it, it does."

Charles Haines, a self-described "cybersex family man with long hair," raised an important concern about the making and sale of pornography. Although he was completely opposed to censorship, he thought that the industry itself was problematic. "The question is, can you produce erotica, art or whatever, that feeds your fantasies? Can you in fact produce erotica with models who are illustrating some of the fantasies that you might not be proud of without exploiting those models or without doing it in a way that is harmful to them or to other people or to society in general? So is there some way I can satisfy my fantasy life with explicit erotica that doesn't require some kind of abuse of the people who are producing it? I don't know."

Kerwin Brooks, who is in the process of writing a book about men and their penises, and who seemed to have done a lot of thinking about this subject, began to talk frankly about the role of pornography in his life: "My personal experience with porn is coming from the place where, beginning in college, I was a real sex addict around porn. And I was like, going to women's studies classes in the day and then going out at night to these porn places, and I'd feel way out of control with it and feel really ashamed, but go get off and then come back. And it's taken me a long time to reclaim my true desires."

Lani agreed. "I was raised Catholic, so I have a lot of old garbage that I bump up against, that I didn't even know was there, and then I came out as a lesbian in the 'seventies with all those Andrea Dworkin early books—that were actually really good but she got really wild later—so I've got a lot of old lesbian feminist stuff which comes up for me, that's totally confusing. Today, I feel like I'm going to be the prude, everyone's

going to see me as this prude. And then I think about my life, that I write really hot erotica and I do the Slut thing, which was mainly my idea, and it's like, I ain't no prude, okay."

"I just don't see singling out pornography as something different than the way we communicate ideas about sex towards children, and to our friends," Mark Harris noted. "It's another essential false lie. I don't really see pornography as anything different, it's just another part of the discourse that is mostly



unhealthy in the United States or in this culture about sex."

Kerwin echoed that thought, while explaining that anything can be pornographic in the right context. "There's all sorts of nasty, like nasty people who get off on all sorts of innocent stuff. My aunt counsels men who abuse kids, and some of the stuff they get off on is watching *Family Ties* on TV, and that's not porn, but they're using it as porn in a big way."

Charles stepped in and began reading from the *Ms.* magazine article that started all this. "Let me read Andrea Dworkin's definition of pornography and see if it sparks any furor in people because it sure did in me. Definition goes like this: 'Pornography is the graphic, sexually explicit subordination of women that includes one of a series of scenarios, from women being dehumanized, turned into objects or commodities, through women showing pleasure in being raped, through dismemberment of women in a way that makes the dismemberment sexual. If men, children, or transsexuals are used in place of women the material is still pornography.' I'll tell you what pissed me off here is the assumption that male on male pornography, one of them's being a woman. That's an extremely heterosexist view of pornography. It pisses me off!"

For A.J., this kind of narrow view was exasperating. I've spent so much time trying to become who I really am, and there are so many people out there, feminists included, who seem to want to put me in a box," she explained. "Every time somebody calls me 'he,' they're saying, 'this is who you are,' and I say, no. If I were a male would I honestly be saving up eight thousand dollars to fly to Belgium and get my dick cut off?"

Kerwin also expressed dismay at this attitude. "I mean the

Mostly when I look at the porn with women in it, it's just like I don't get it, I don't like it, it doesn't do anything. I don't know, but I like seeing men fuck. LK

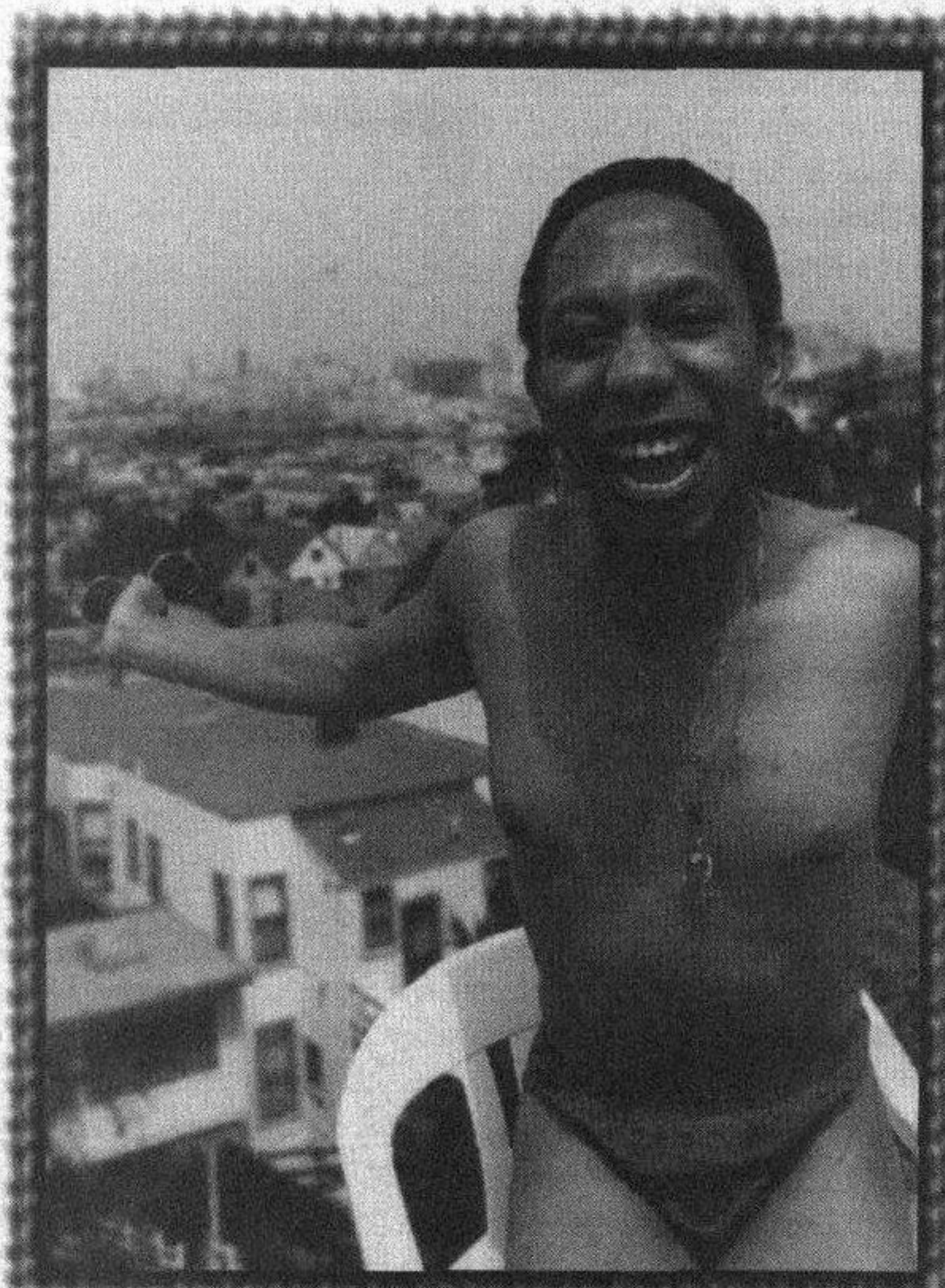
thing that I think with the anti-porn feminism that bothers me is that what's being said is there's a problem with the desire, if you get off on this, if this turns you on that's wrong, and that is not true. That's one of many lies." He added, "I think the anti-porn approach is to say, let's get rid of the whores, and what I say is, let's start respecting the whores."

A lot of nodding. But what was there to do? Mark Silver pointed out that Andrea Dworkin's law had been used by the right to close down gay bookstores in Canada, and that censorship is a political and social reality that we need to address directly.

"To deny that exploitative pornography goes on, no one would dream of doing that as far as I know," Charles pointed out, "but to equate all pornography with exploitative pornography is ridiculous. It's equally simplistic."

Mark Harris agreed whole-heartedly. "The answer to censorship: not censoring. And, even if you think it's boring, *On Our Backs* and *Taste of Latex*, which I have not read in a long time, but I'll go out and buy that soon. Life sucks, but what else can you do? The only thing to do is keep making pornography and talking about it."

Terry seemed to agree. "The difference to me between looking at *Playboy* or looking at *On Our Backs*, I don't know

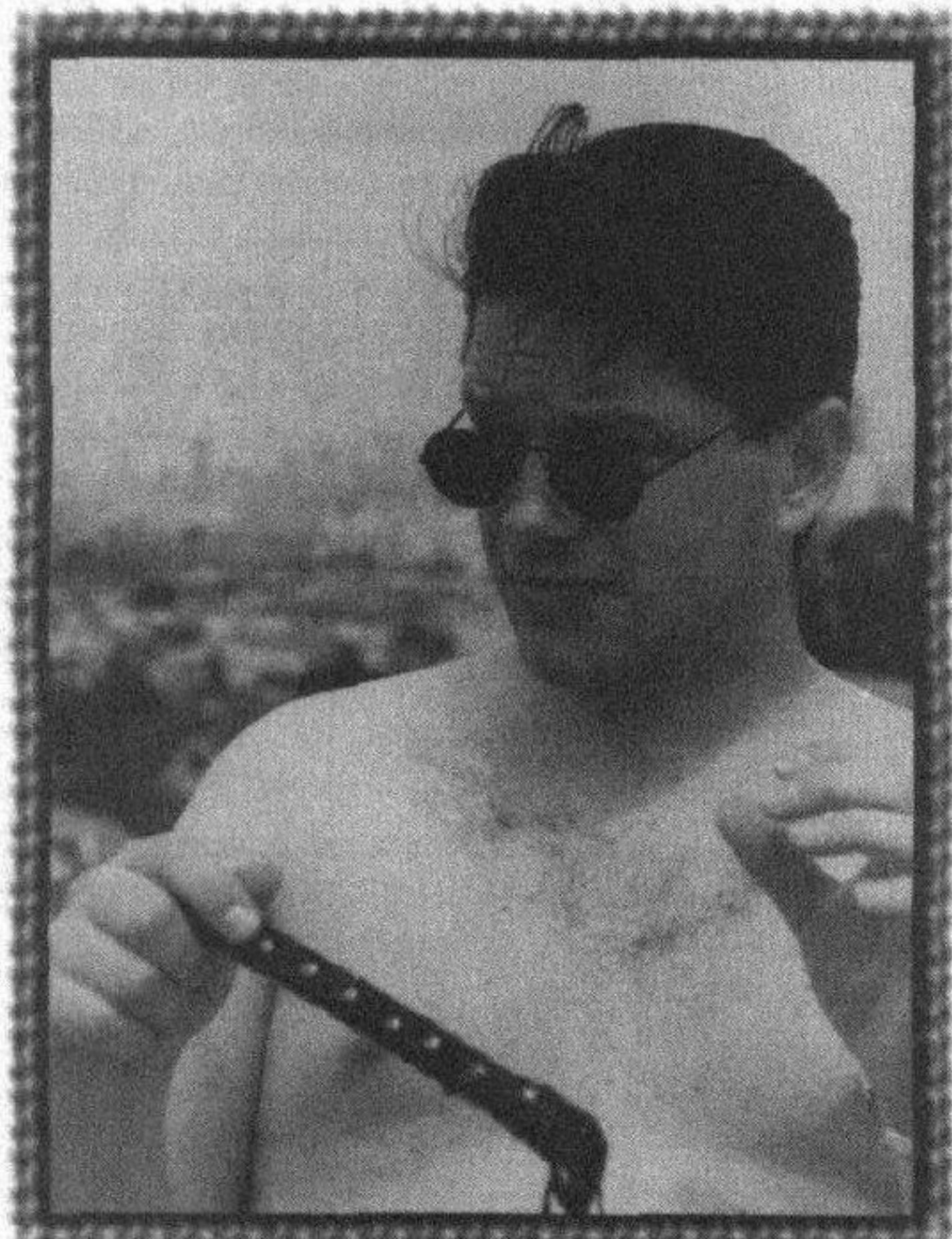


This is the first time I've had nude pictures taken since I changed over. I wasn't quite sure what to expect for myself. I felt incredibly powerful sitting around flashing my breasts for all the Castro to see. AJ

what the difference is. I think mostly, at this point, just what magazine it is makes the difference for me. My experience has made me leery of looking at *Hustler* or *Penthouse*, so now, even though there's really no difference between those and *On Our Backs*, just the fact of who's putting it together, who's viewing it, and what they're getting from it makes all the difference in the world."

Sure, in theory, I thought. But those underground sex 'zines rarely do anything for me. Lani seemed to be reading my mind when she said, "Mostly when I look at the porn with women in it, it's just like I don't get it, I don't like it, it doesn't do anything, it's like, I don't know, but I like seeing men fuck."

Terry agreed that porn is in the viewer's eye. "My mom thought that picture of kd lang and Cindy Crawford was pornography. But they have their clothes on. But you can see the desire in their eyes."



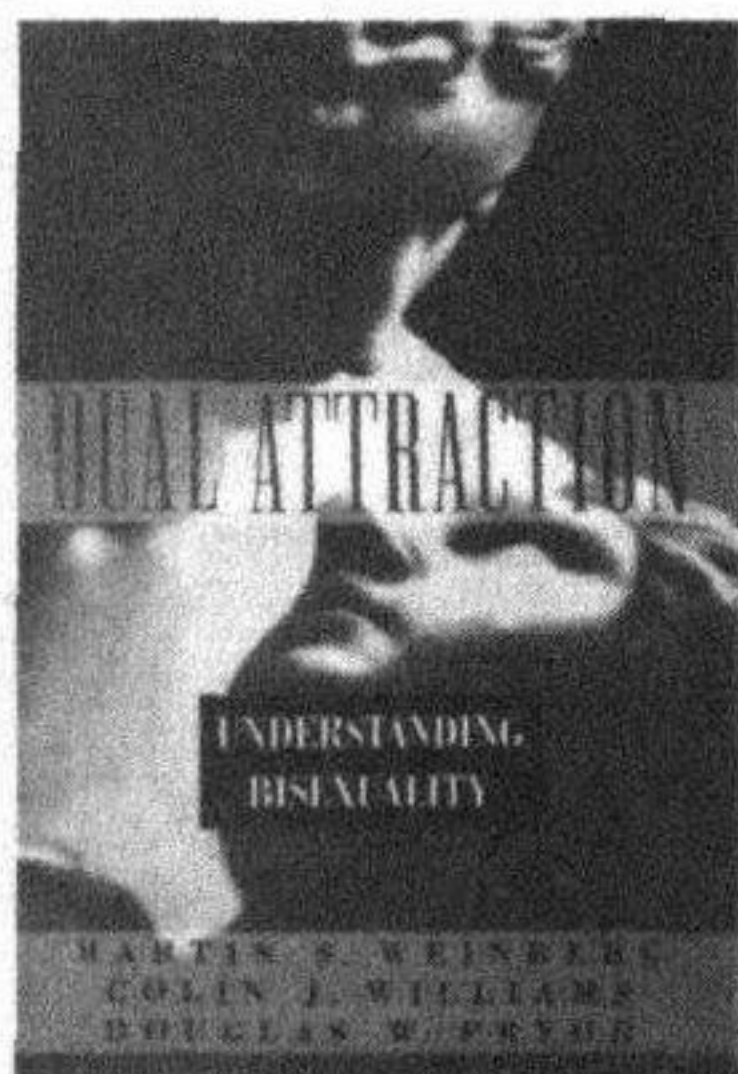
The answer to censorship, is not censoring. The only thing to do is keep making pornography and talking about it. MH



DUAL ATTRACTION: INCONSISTENT MESSAGE

REVIEW

by Paul Smith



Weinberg, Williams, Pryor, *Dual Attraction: Understanding Bisexuality* c. 1994, Oxford University Press

Dual Attraction is a newly published study of bisexual people in San Francisco conducted in the mid-1980s. Of course, many of us were excited by the prospect of reading about ourselves, and we were open to hearing an objective discussion of our lives. It seemed to hold

the promise of legitimizing bisexuality to both the queer and the straight worlds. So why is this book encountering mixed reviews throughout the bisexual community?

For one thing, it contains a number of troubling inconsistencies. The authors acknowledge the wide diversity of "bisexualities," but their focus is too narrow.

The book firmly asserts that sexual identity is a continuum, and not a dichotomy, where bisexuality is prominent and integral. But because the authors have limited the primary focus of their research to San Francisco Bi Center participants in the early eighties, *Dual Attraction's* accuracy and relevance are diminished.

Maggi Rubenstein, a founder of the Bi Center, bisexual activist, educator and therapist who is acknowledged as the catalyst for *Dual Attraction*, finds the book both invaluable and inaccurate. She states, "History is never invalid. The people who came to the Bi Center were who they were. . . . [*Dual Attraction*] is an attempt by three straights to record bisexual history that was a little bit off."

According to *Dual Attraction*, most bisexuals were found to have come out as bi relatively later in life than straights, gays or lesbians. The book also states that most of those surveyed from the Bi Center started out identifying as heterosexual and "added on" homosexuality, later identifying as bisexual.

San Francisco bisexual activist Lani Ka'ahumanu observes that the book is "an in-depth study of a certain group of more heterosexually-identified bisexuals, some of whom were swingers, [and swingers] are the bull-dykes or drag queens of our [bisexual] movement, the stereotype. . . . The right wing will take this and make the most of it."

In 1983, the authors, three heterosexual sociologists, came to San Francisco to interview members of the Bisexual Center. The authors state that the Bi Center was the largest and most active bisexual organization in the country at the time.

Weinberg, Williams and Pryor set up office space at the Bi Center itself, engaged eight members to help conduct 150 extensive interviews (of which apparently 100 were used), and observed rap groups at the Center. They also assisted in the day-to-day operations of the Center, answering the phone,

handing out literature, helping with the newsletter and participating in various events. They visited a wide variety of institutions, clubs and cultural outlets which formed bisexual life in the San Francisco Bay Area at that time.

In 1984 and 1985 the three circulated roughly 400 questionnaires to members of three organizations concerned with sexuality. This was done to compare the responses of self-identified heterosexuals, homosexuals and bisexuals. In 1988, 61 of the original Bi Center members were re-interviewed to determine the extent of changes in identity wrought by social developments, and specifically to explore the impact of AIDS.

The book addresses itself to moving beyond widely-held theories of sexual preference as a fixed biological characteristic, either homo- or heterosexuality. *Dual Attraction* declares that social factors foster or inhibit sexual behaviors and identity, even if there are biological forces in play.

There is concern that the authors did not analyze subjects outside this selected heterosexually-identified bisexual track. Maggi Rubenstein laments that, "gays and lesbians redefining themselves as bi [was] not addressed."

Co-author Martin Weinberg acknowledged this concern in an interview with *ATM*. "We did not set out to take this and generalize for all bisexuals. This study showed how bisexuality is formed by opportunities and support available to bisexuals in a particular time and place. Bis in Kansas today are not the same as bis in San Francisco then. Even if bisexuality has a biological basis, bisexuality is formed by context."

I also got the sense that the authors were preoccupied with generalizing to all bisexuals ideas which were based on the experiences of those who had initially identified as heterosexual and later had a homosexual "add on."

Stereotyping also came to mind while reading that bisexuals were "confused." Rubenstein remarked on the authors' lack of historical context: "Of course we were confused in many ways. Who wouldn't be confused when fighting traditional values while lacking any sort of clear role models? Of course bis are confused, but not like Martin [Weinberg] said. The society refuses to let us look at loving both men and women. And so when one does, it is confusing. If you have never been given a safe place to be, and support to have an open discussion of this, it will be confusing to confront these issues." Rubenstein reports that she had the chance to review and comment on a draft of the manuscript of *Dual Attraction*, "but Weinberg stuck to his views in many ways. He genuinely wanted to do a good job, but he was removed: an East Coast straight."

I feel that *Dual Attraction* does present a new high-water mark in research of bisexuals, but this level leaves a lot of room for further development. Generally speaking, nothing surpasses it in research literature on bisexuals today, either in scope, effort or sincerity. As Maggi Rubenstein puts it, "[Weinberg] did his best. But he didn't live a bisexual life. While the data could be interpreted a number of ways, and while he was trying to be objective . . . he didn't quite get it at times. He was looking at it from the sidelines. He was not in the belly of the beast."

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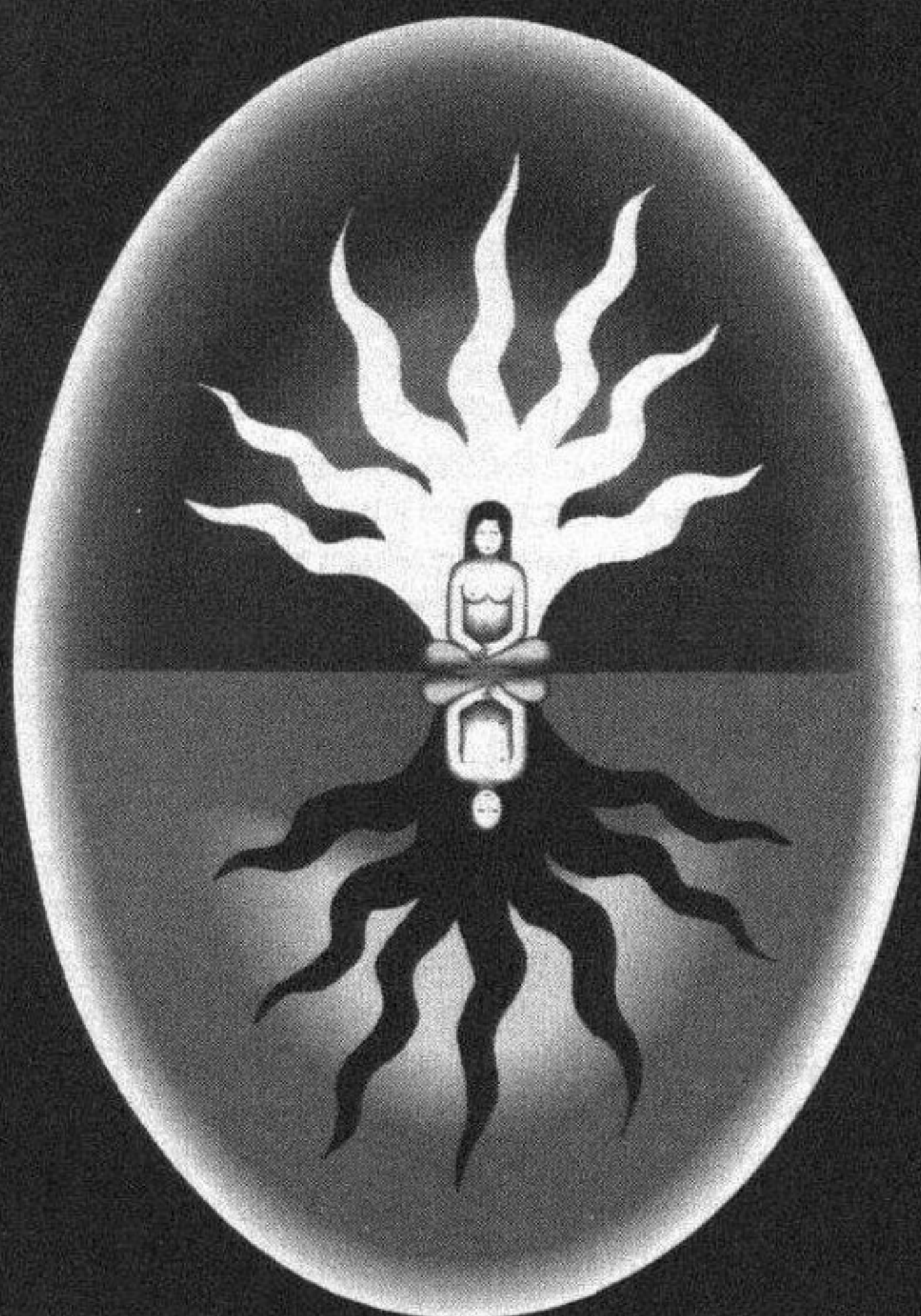
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THE ENEMY IS IN MY HOUSE

PART III: THE BATTERED WOMEN'S MOVEMENT AND BISEXUAL INVISIBILITY

by Naomi Tucker

The following is the third in a series of articles on domestic violence, a topic which ATM has committed to explore as a service to our community. The first article, appearing in Issue #5 of ATM, portrayed the exploitation of passion in abusive relationships, the devastating impact of sexual abuse, and the aspects of one's sexual self and identity that are affected by experiences of abuse. The second article, published in Issue #7, examined the ways in which abusive relationships manipulate and deeply wound one's spiritual self. In this issue, we look at the role of bisexual women in the battered women's movement. As always, we invite your comments and personal stories.

BISEXUAL WOMEN ACTIVISTS

It is no secret that the early battered women's movement owes a great deal to lesbian feminism. Many of the movement's leaders and most radical organizers were lesbians. Only as the movement has gained more widespread acceptance and mainstream popularity in the U.S. this past decade have more heterosexual women joined the ranks in large numbers. While this history is well documented, virtually no literature exists describing the role (or even the existence) of bisexual women activists, shelter residents, organizers, or advocates in the battered women's movement. Surprised? Of course not. We are used to being written out of history, our dedication to lesbian and/or feminist organizing erased from the annals of the movement. Nonetheless, bisexual women have always been, and continue to be, present in large numbers in the fight to free women from domestic violence.

Many organizations and battered women's programs have suffered from the same biphobia that we see everywhere: homophobia keeps bisexual women closeted from heterosexuals; biphobia amongst lesbians prevents bi women from feeling safe to come out as such. We are too queer for some and not queer enough for others. Bisexuals in battered women's programs must battle the constant assumptions and misconceptions of our peers. Programs and task forces designed to work with battered women who are lesbian often exclude bisexual women from their organizations, either assuming we're straight or, if we come out as bi, claiming that we would not understand lesbian issues.

FROM DREAM TO DISILLUSION

My personal experience has been mixed. Because I am a loud and visible bisexual activist, my peers in the battered women's movement can hardly ignore or discount my bisexuality. After nearly a decade in the movement, it is also hard for even the greatest biphobes to discount my commitment to battered women or to the lesbians within the movement. But I live in San Francisco. I have written and spoken on bisexuality. I have a national community of bisexuals behind me, giving me incredible support. Not everyone is so lucky. Many bi women are isolated in rural areas; they work in programs where they have never met another bisexual person let alone a community; they live in places where there is either more homophobia or a more rigid, biphobic lesbian community. Those women have remained largely silent, passing as either lesbian or straight and convinced they would never be accepted for who they truly are.

In the early eighties I volunteered in a New England shelter for battered women where the small staff of four was mixed, lesbian and heterosexual. For the most part, they either ignored or were mildly perplexed by my bisexuality. Looking back, I think some of my lesbian mentors took me for a fledgling college dyke who just wasn't all the way out yet. In sum, they were tolerant but ignorant.

Later, I spent nine months as an intern in a battered women's shelter in France, where the lesbian and feminist communities are separate entities without much communication. The silent dictum asserted if you couldn't talk about your husband, you just shut up and didn't talk. Needless to say I did not feel safe to be out. There was only one obvious dyke on our large staff, and even she never mentioned the word "lesbian." Battering was assumed to be a uniquely heterosexual phenomenon.

In 1988 I moved back to the Bay Area and went to work for a small program in the suburbs of San Francisco. Not long after I was hired, I was scheduled to give a workshop on lesbian battering. Unbeknownst to me, while I was preparing my workshop, my straight (but very hip) director had asked my lesbian (and bi-positive) coworker how she felt about my speaking on the subject of lesbian battering. Perplexed, my coworker said that she felt fine, and why shouldn't she? The director answered that she found it a bit odd for a straight woman to run workshops on lesbian battering. My coworker smiled. "Naomi is not straight," she said gently.

Throughout the four years I worked in that shelter, I was always out as bisexual to my coworkers. Most of the staff, both lesbian and straight, was overwhelmingly supportive. In 1989 and 1990 I was busy producing the National Bisexual Conference. The unfailing encouragement of my supervisors, not to mention the use of office equipment, were indispensable to me in accomplishing that task. Although I did not know of any other bisexual women working in shelters, I felt fortunate to have found a safe, nurturing work environment where I could be myself.

But by 1991 my own safe haven began to crumble. A new lesbian staff member was outwardly belligerent and frequently made derogatory jokes about my bisexuality. My supportive directors had left the program, replaced by homophobic tyrants who proceeded to fire one of my coworkers for being a lesbian. Disillusioned, I wondered what the world was coming to if I couldn't be out in a battered women's shelter.

As I became more involved in coalition work in the battered women's movement, both locally and nationally, I began to notice that not everyone was so accepting of bisexual women. In fact, the few women who (secretly) came out to me as bisexual related stories of belittlement and rejection from their sisters in the movement. At the 1990 Amherst, Massachusetts conference of the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, I felt the painful absence of any bisexual awareness. There were unlearning homophobia workshops segregated into "straight women only" and "lesbians only." Where was a bi woman to go? I went to neither. I remember slinking in the back corner of the room at the lesbian caucus meeting, scared to death that I had the "b" word written in purple ink on my forehead. A lesbian friend later asked me why I didn't stand up at the meeting and say something about including bisexuals. "Are you kidding?" I responded in horror, "Me, the new kid on the block, single-handedly confronting 300 lesbians? I may be pushy, but I'm not crazy . . ." Riot visions flashed through my terrified brain. Yes, I was afraid. But I was also spouting signs of self-deprecation, not wanting to obscure "more important issues" (like lesbian battering) with my own agenda. Given how much the caucus needed to accomplish in a short amount of time, I told myself that everyone would resent the addition of something else to "deal with."

A particular brand of biphobia arises in the battered women's movement because so much of our work focuses on male violence against women. Remember that some of the most intense bisexuality wars have been waged in the battlefields of feminism. The battered women's movement represents in some ways the quintessential feminist issue: women's right to safety and empowerment. It is therefore the perfect laboratory for replicating the conditions of biphobia, as well as other problems of the women's movement. Take first, a group of lesbians who devoted themselves to saving the lives of heterosexual women from their violent male partners. Then add a group of straight feminists who wrote the books and analyses of battering using heterosexist language and assumptions. Throw in a few women who swear that using gender-neutral language to include lesbians actually weakens the feminist argument. Mix all of this in a base of radical feminism that hierarchizes sexism above other

oppressions. Spice it up with the notion that bisexual women are internalized homophobes "sleeping with the enemy" and robbing energy from the oh-so-perfect women's community. No matter how you bake it, it comes up nasty.

It is also quite easy to become a separatist when you work in the field of violence against women. Unless you have significant experience in lesbian, gay, and bisexual domestic violence, it is easy to say that men are the problem. In some cases, men — and their violent socialization of power and control — are in fact the problem. But any woman who has been beaten or raped by her woman partner knows that analysis is inadequate, because it does not explain her experience. And the all-men-are-batterers philosophy doesn't work for bisexual women in healthy relationships with men, either. In some ways bisexual women are in a unique position to understand battering from a broader analysis of power and control. We are not satisfied with the explanation of male violence because we know we can experience abuse from a female partner as well. Yet if we are with men, we become intimately aware of men's power and control issues. No one ever said it was easy to be a feminist involved with men. In short, I think we are able to understand the experiences of both lesbians and straight feminists, perhaps acting as a bridge between the two.

MOVING FORWARD

In the sixteen-year history of the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV), the main grassroots network of battered women's groups in the U.S., it has always been common knowledge that bisexual women were not welcome in the Lesbian Task Force. When I was asked to join the board of directors in 1992, I wondered if I would participate in Lesbian Task Force meetings. I did — but only after some fabulous allies met separately with the Task Force chair to determine my eligibility. Had my new-found friends not advocated strongly on my behalf, history might have repeated itself. Instead they accepted me, and saw that I had valuable ideas and energy to contribute. Over time I began to ask for more inclusive language in our conversations and literature. But the great rock moved only when crisis struck.

NCADV maintains its national office in Denver, Colorado, and had chosen that location for its 1993 national conference. With the passage of Amendment 2 in November '92, excluding "homosexuals, lesbians, and bisexuals" from equal protection under the law, NCADV was caught up in raging debates about the campaign to boycott Colorado. For hours around the board meeting table, I heard lesbian/gay this; lesbian/gay that; what do lesbian and gay Coloradans want us to do; what is best for lesbian/gay survivors of domestic violence in Colorado. Finally I couldn't stand another minute of omission, and I nearly stood on the table as I shouted through my tears. The "b" word was there in print, in the Amendment 2 legislation, right in front of our eyes. Coloradans for Family Values had clearly established bisexuals as the enemy right alongside lesbians and gays. They were not afraid to name us in their hor-

rific law. "Why is it," I shouted, "that we are included in all of the hatred; that we are targeted by the Right Wing; that we experience the same fear for our lives . . . but we are never included in the safety plans, the community, the places that could give us strength?" My words raged for what seemed like an infinity, spitting forth from a place deep within my gut. After I quieted down there was silence. And then slowly, women around the table began to come out, to admit how silenced they have felt as bisexuals within the battered women's movement. Before I knew it I was surrounded by family. It was a most amazing phenomenon.

Later that month, all of the literature that NCADV published regarding Amendment 2 included bisexuals wherever it included lesbians, both in discussions of homophobia and in mentioning women battered by female partners.

So now NCADV's lesbian task force welcomes me as an out bisexual woman. Several months ago, a shelter worker from Oregon called me to gather information for a bisexual group forming at her program. NCADV's upcoming conference actually has a bisexual workshop on the program. San Francisco has a "Network for Battered Lesbians and Bisexual Women."

Small revolutions like these give me hope that our work is indeed worthwhile. If a national organization can change its tune after many years of biphobia . . . if this year's national conference is empowering for bisexual women in the movement . . . then the world is a slightly safer place, and I am re-inspired to keep fighting.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RESOURCES: WOMEN

WOMAN Inc.: Has a 24-hour crisis line (415/864-4722), counseling, support for lesbians in abusive relationships, and referrals for batterers who are lesbian.

San Francisco Network for Battered Lesbians and Bisexual Women (415/281-0276, Voicemail) support group, info and referral.

Naming The Violence: Speaking Out About Lesbian Battering by Claire M. Renzetti, Sage Publications, Newburg Park, CA, 1992. Contains a comprehensive resources listing of lesbian battering programs/services nationwide.

Getting Free by Ginny NiCarthy, Seal Press. A handbook for women in, or leaving, abusive relationships.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RESOURCES: MEN

CUAV (Community United Against Violence): Has a 24-hour crisis line (415/333-HELP) for gay or bisexual men battered by a male partner.

MOVE (Men Overcoming Violence): Service for men of all sexual orientations who batter (415/777-4496).

Men Who Beat The Men Who Love Them: Battered Gay Men and Domestic Violence by David Island and Patrick Letellier, eds., Haworth/Harrington Park Press, NY, 1991.

For resources outside the Bay Area, call your local battered women's shelter listed under crisis/emergency numbers in the front of the phone book. A national directory of domestic violence programs is available for \$25 from NCADV.

National Coalition Against Domestic Violence
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NO ONE DESERVES TO BE ABUSED!

Underwear

The Autobiography Of My Underwear

I am too young to write my autobiography
but my underwear has seen much;
it has been piss stained

come stained
shit stained

locked in darkness most of its life
thrown away to prevent chafing in Nicaragua.

It has lain on floors
and has been thrown over furniture
felt a warm teasing mouth
and has been lost between sheets
my underwear wrapped around ankles
in passionate haste

My underwear has been washed and dried
and washed and dried.
It has been Startfields, Fruit of the Loom and Mr. Brief.
Bikini briefs and coloured boxers.
Outgrown, turned to rags and bought anew.
The autobiography of my underwear is ongoing.

photos by Ellen Clary

poems by
**Jeffery
Mackie**

Kurt Cobain Fantasy No. 1

I want to neck with Kurt Cobain
and touch his pelvis.
I want to neck with Kurt Cobain
and make Courtney jealous.

What else can I say
everyone is gay.
I want him to milk my shit.
I want to stroke his hair
and light his cigarette.

Let me read my poems aloud
while he sleeps on my pillow.
He can sign my copy of The Advocate.
Let me be a star obsessed dreamer
and late night reamer.
Embossed with the vulgarity of obsession.

BISEXUAL FILM STARS OF THE 1950s

by Wayne Bryant

One of Hollywood's most curious historical anomalies is the prevalence of bisexual actors and actresses in the leading roles of the biggest hit movies during one of this country's most reactionary periods, the 1950s. While Senator Joe McCarthy, Roy Cohn, and Congressman Richard Nixon were conducting their witch hunts — destroying the lives and careers of suspected Communists, homosexuals, and bisexuals — droves of theatre patrons were paying to see these bisexual stars on the screen.

Marlon Brando was one of the most popular leading men in film during the 1950s. From *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1951) to *Viva Zapata* (1952), *The Wild One* (1954), *On the Waterfront* (1954), *Guys and Dolls* (1955), and *Sayonara* (1957) among many others, Brando averaged one hit movie per year during this decade. Brando revealed his bisexuality in an interview in 1976 saying, "Like many men, I, too, have had homosexual experiences and I am not ashamed."

Perhaps the biggest shooting star of the 1950s was James Dean. Dean's career lasted a mere sixteen months before his death at the wheel of a silver Porsche on September 30, 1955. During that time he made three films, only the first of which was released before he died. *East of Eden* (1954) catapulted Dean to instant stardom and established his rebel reputation. His subsequent *Rebel Without a Cause* (1955) ensured his place as a legendary sex-symbol. Dean finished his role in *Giant* only days before his death. Rumors of Dean's bisexuality were rampant, even when he was alive. He told one inquiring reporter, "I'm certainly not going through life with one hand tied behind my back."

Sal Mineo, another actor linked with both female and

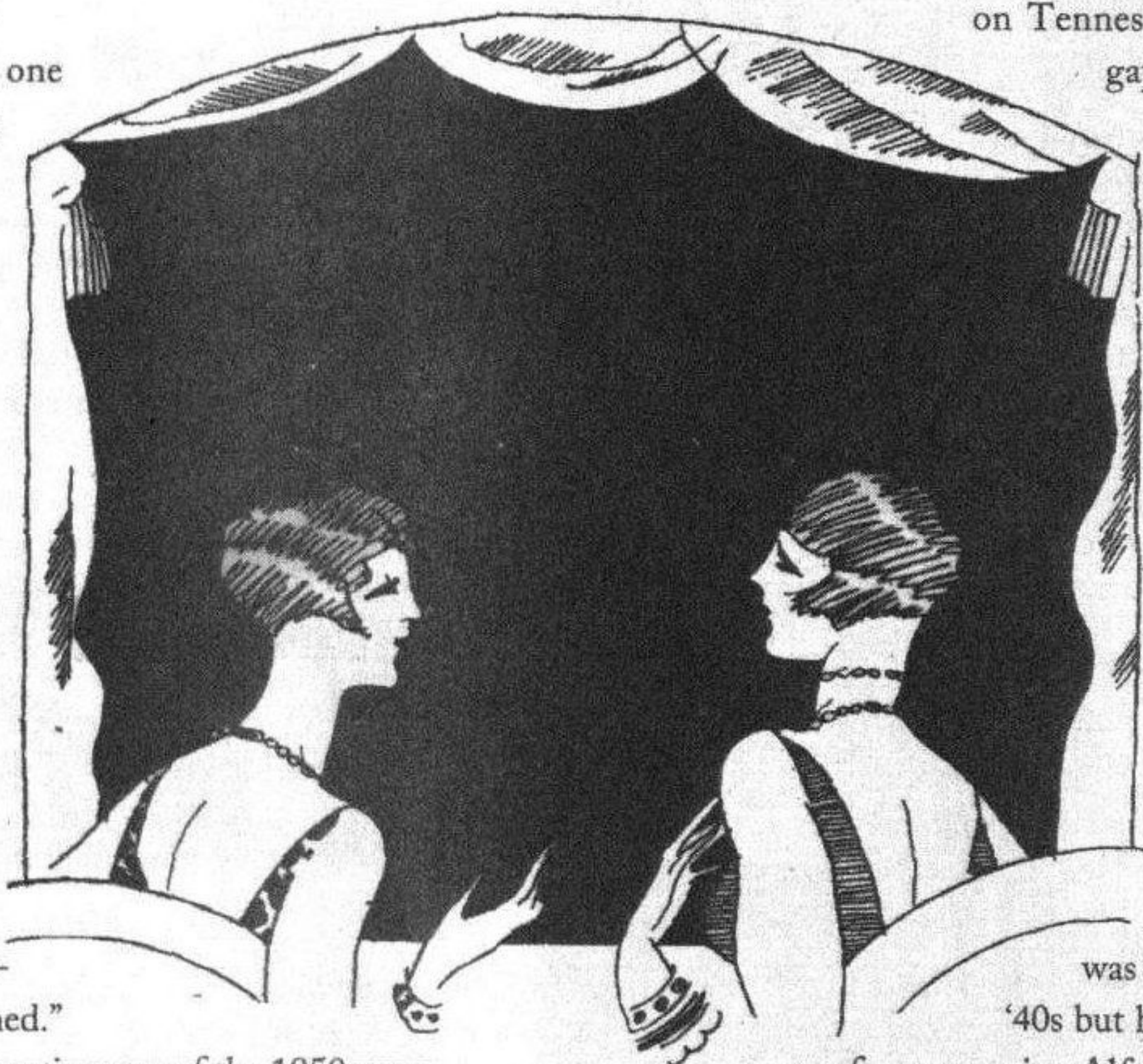
male lovers, also appeared with Dean in both *Giant* and *Rebel Without a Cause*. The latter film has a bisexual subtext which is most apparent in the loving tender scene with Natalie Wood and Dean just before Mineo's character dies.

Another famous leading man of '50s films was Montgomery Clift. Clift starred in films such as *A Place In the Sun* (1951), *From Here to Eternity* (1953), *The Young Lions* (with Brando in 1958), and *Suddenly Last Summer* (1959) based on Tennessee Williams' play about a

gay writer who is eaten by a gang of children. The character of the writer never appeared in the movie because the Motion Picture Association (MPA) code at that time did not allow gay characters to appear on screen. According to one of his biographers, Clift was married and had his strongest emotional attachments with women but preferred sex with men.¹

Cary Grant's stardom was at its heights in the '30s and '40s but he still delivered a great performance in Alfred Hitchcock's *North By Northwest* (1959), in which he plays an ad executive who inadvertently gets involved with a group of international spies. Grant was lovers with actor Randolph Scott, known for his macho Western characters. Grant was also the first actor to use the word "gay" to mean homosexual in an American film. The MPA Code explicitly prohibited its use, but he ad-libbed the line in *Bringing Up Baby* (1938) and somehow it escaped the censors.

Another hold-over from previous decades was Errol Flynn. Well-known for his many female companions, Flynn was also attracted to men according to biographer Charles Higham, and counted Tyrone Power and Truman Capote



among his lovers. In *The Lavender Screen* (1993), a book on gay films and film stars, author Boze Hadleigh writes that Flynn's wife, Damita, was also bisexual. Also, Errol Flynn was hardly Tyrone Power's only male lover. A number of biographers confirm that Power had sexual encounters with numerous men and women.

One of Power's lovers was singer and actress Judy Garland, best known for her role as Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz* (1939). She did, however, have a successful film in the '50s, *A Star Is Born* (1954), which featured her singing talent as well as her fine acting skills. This film was the work of gay director George Cukor.

The durable Marlene Dietrich, pinup in World War II, is found in several 1950s movies. Marlene was a successful stage singer in the 1950s and sings in Alfred Hitchcock's 1950 film, *Stage Fright*. Dietrich also teamed up with German director Fritz Lang in *Rancho Notorious* (1952), and she is one of more than forty stars to appear in *Around the World in 80 Days*, which won the Best Picture Oscar in 1956. Dietrich's best-known female lover was Mercedes de Acosta, whom she stole away from Greta Garbo. Marlene was also known to have been sexual with Gary Cooper, Douglas Fairbanks Jr., Yul Brenner, and Kirk Douglas. In the 1930 film *Morocco*, Dietrich portrayed what might be understood as a bisexual film role. She is in love with Gary Cooper's character, but during a cabaret performance in which she is dressed in a tux, she steps into the audience and gives one of the female patrons a seductive look, followed by a kiss on the lips. Bianca Stroock, a European designer who worked on several Dietrich films, quotes Dietrich as once saying, "In Europe it doesn't matter if you're a man or a woman. We make love with anyone we find attractive."

Another bisexual European import was Laurence Olivier. According to biographer Thomas Kiernan, Olivier was the longtime lover of Danny Kaye when both were married. The two actors had adjacent houses in Beverly Hills during Olivier's second (of three) marriages. In 1960, Olivier had a bisexual role in the film *Spartacus*. The scene revealing his bisexuality was deleted from the film under the Motion Picture Production Code, which forbade all references to homosexuality. It was not restored to the picture until 1991.

In *The Lavender Screen*, Boze Hadleigh identifies actor Robert Taylor as bisexual. At that time Taylor was married to actress Barbara Stanwyck (whom Hadleigh identifies as lesbian). Taylor had many important and popular roles throughout the '50s such as *Quo Vadis* (1951), a film about Nero and religious persecution with Peter Ustinov, *Ivanhoe* (1953) with Elizabeth Taylor and *The Knights of the Round Table* (1954).

One of the most flamboyant bisexual actresses of the '50s was Tallulah Bankhead. Her limited number of film roles may well have been the result of her outspokenness on matters of sex and sexuality. Tallulah is reported to have told Joan Crawford, "Darling, you're divine. I've had an affair with your husband. You'll be next." Her best-known film from the '50s is *Main Street to Broadway* (1953). She was also successful on stage, where the pressure to remain closeted was not nearly so great.

Rock Hudson spent most of his life denying his attraction to men. However, biographers have now clearly documented his bisexuality. After vehement denials in 1980 of any homosexual relationships, Hudson finally admitted having had attractions to both men and women, just three years before his death, in a 1982 interview with Boze Hadleigh (who apparently specializes in interviewing queer film stars). In the interview, he identified as gay and made biphobic comments like, "Bisexual just means you pay for it," and "Most bis are just bullshitters."

The King of Rock 'n Roll was also a box-office sensation during the 1950s. If Elvis had only been willing to admit that he also slept with men, he might not have had his career interrupted for military service. One wonders how many soldiers would have been afraid to shower with him if they only knew. Interestingly, it was Presley's former manager, Colonel Tom Parker, who spilled the beans in a biography published after Elvis died about Elvis's willingness to sleep with people of either sex early in his career.

Due to the severe oppression of bisexual, lesbian, and gay people during the 1950s, we are only beginning to learn some of their stories as they pass into history. The true sexuality of some stars is probably lost forever. Private papers, love letters, diaries, and the reminiscences of old friends continue to provide new information for biographers and historians. With the threat of jail all but eliminated and a broader acceptance in the general population, film stars and performers are increasingly likely to reveal and even celebrate their alternative sexualities. With more bisexual celebrities coming out, no child need ever again grow up thinking he or she is the only one.

Wayne Bryant lives near Boston with two cats and his lover of twenty years. He is a founding member of Biversity Boston, has recently completed a book — Bisexual Characters in Film: From Anaïs to Zee, and supports his writing habit by designing computer software.

¹*Montgomery Clift: Beautiful Loser* by Barney Hoskyns

YOU

by Leah Zanoni

ARE SPRAWLED THROUGHOUT MY BLUE
FLOWERED SHEETS IN A FADED PINK COTTON
BATHROBE, SIPPING A FLAT CAN OF COCA-
COLA. DRINKING THE SODA WITH YOUR
MOUTH AND ME IN WITH YOUR EYES, YOU
TELL ME THAT THERE IS NOTHING BAD ABOUT
WANTING TO BE TOUCHED BY YOU. THAT
THERE IS NOTHING WRONG WITH ME FOR
HATING IT WHEN MY BREASTS ARE GROPED
AT MADLY BY AN ADOLESCENT PIMPLE FACE
OUT FOR A STORY. OR FOR IGNORING HIM
WHEN THE SAME SORRY SAD KEEPS
SENDING ME PITHY LOVE NOTES SOAKED IN
PURPLE HEARTS AND ADMISSIONS OF TRUE
LOVE, WHEN ALL I CAN DO IS TRY TO
PRETEND THAT I CARE, AND AM FLATTERED.
WOMEN ARE NOT ALLOWED TO LOVE THE
WORD BEAUTIFUL, WITH ITS LONG GOLDEN
HAIR AND SCENT OF PERFUME. OR LONG FOR
SOFT SKIN, RIGHT OUT OF A WARM
SHOWER, WHOSE WATER TRICKLED
INTERMITTENTLY FROM A SINGLE STALL. I
WANT TO OPEN THAT MOLDY CURTAIN AND
STEP IN, THROUGH COOL, SLIMY PUDDLES
OF SHAME, INTO THE ARMS OF A SOUGHT
OUT UNION. AS YOU SPEAK I TAKE THE
CAFFEINE DREAM FROM YOUR HANDS AND
UNTIE YOU ROBE. THERE IS NOTHING
WRONG WITH WANTING TO BE TOUCHED.

VAMPIRE DANCES

by Tynan Adams

(FOR THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO FIGHT FOR THE RIGHT TO WALK IN TWILIGHT
IN SPECIAL MEMORY OF THE MEN OF STOREFRONT IN THE VILLAGE AND PRISONERS WHO
WORE PINK TRIANGLES.)

FIRST INSTINCT IS
TO SUCKLE, INCHING UP
LIPPING THE NIPPLE FLESH UNTIL
WE LEARN THAT WE ARE POISON
FOR THE MIND

SECOND INSTINCT IS
INCHING UP AGAIN
TO NADES OF NECKS
AND DOWN THE SMALLS OF BACKS
AND RIDGED STOMACHS

THE BODY'S REVERA
TAKES THE PLACE OF MOTHER
WE KNEEL AND MAKE SACRIFICE
NOT TO HUMBLE—
BUT TO COVET AND TO STEAL

SISTERS AND BROTHERS
HOWLING OUT A "NO"
WE WALK AT NIGHT TOGETHER
SLIDING THROUGH THE MARGINS
TO THE SHADOWS

THE STRAIGHT POOP: BI HISTORY

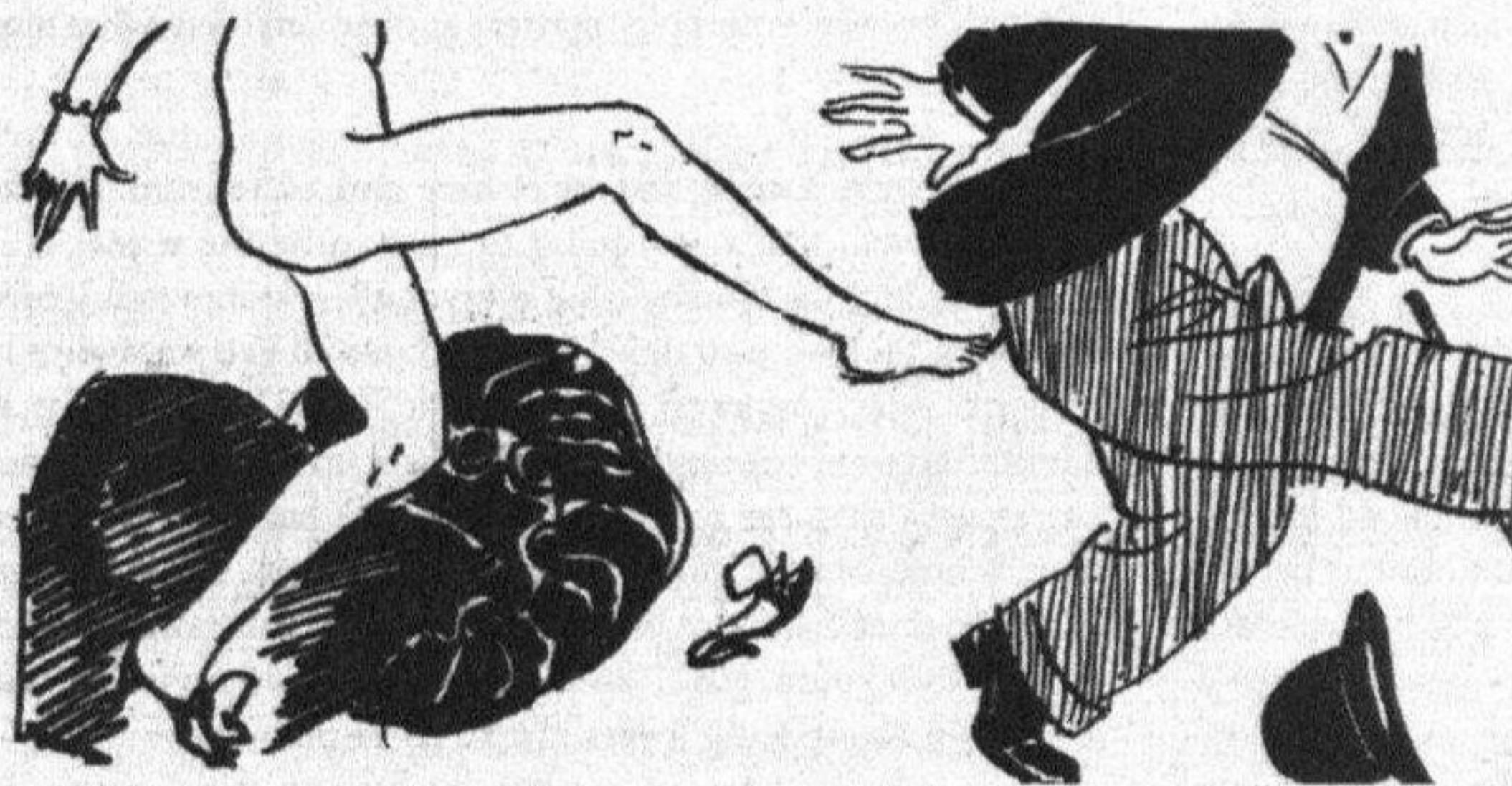
by Paul Smith

reclaim it...

Much of "gay and lesbian" history is actually bisexual history. While traditional queer historians may relate in a footnote how this or that particular historical figure also engaged in certain sexual acts, these figures are usually recognized in a monosexual prism as homosexual. Bisexuals are a part of every step of "gay and lesbian" history but are usually acknowledged as gay or lesbian, and not bisexual.

know how to recognize us. In our failure they declare us to be inauthentic. The way to rectify this misconception is to state that there is no difference in our agenda; we share the gay and lesbian agenda, but we want their recognition and support for our community as part of the whole. Bisexuals and transgendered people, who started the whole Stonewall riot by throwing cobblestones at the cops, are part of this movement's history yet we are asked to go to New York this summer for the "International March on the United Nations for Human Rights of Lesbian and Gay People." Harumph.

We need history to record our part



The book, *Hidden from History: Reclaiming Gay and Lesbian Past* (Duberman, Vicinus and Chauncey, eds.), sets out ten articles on pre-19th century gay and lesbian history by describing people with primarily bisexual behavior. One reads about Lord and Lady So-and-So tag-teaming all of the butlers and maids. Yet this book which "reclaims" history in its title, acts to expunge the "b-word" from every page.

This destruction of our history costs us today. Gay and lesbian organizations ask us to undertake the impossible: to declare to them what is unique about our agenda, so that they may

as bisexuals. Failing to act may have been Hamlet's downfall, but it hasn't been ours. However, until recently, had we always been visible as bisexuals when we acted? Our present historical invisibility wipes out our past visibility. There is much to reclaim.

making history...

What is the bisexual historical agenda? The most important part is that we need to create, define, and record our own history — and not leave that to someone else.

We need to address the stereotypes held by others. We are not particularly confused any more than anyone else would be whose identity has no role models preserved in history. The confusion perceived to be inherent in the personalities of bisexuals is, in my mind, the manifestation of the destruction of our history.

The recent book, *Dual Attraction: Understanding Bisexuality*, written by three heterosexual academicians takes part in this destruction. While the book sets out much valuable material, it is all seen through the monosexual view of the authors. This becomes apparent as the authors lay out the apparent commonalities in all bisexuals: being variable in our sexuality and having "built-in" non-monogamy because of our "dual" attraction. Things are dual when one sees the world in terms of two sex roles exercising hegemony. I see myself attracted to only one species, and being absolutely certain about that.

This hegemony highlights the need for bisexuals to address the gender distinctions which oppress men and women. Feminism is of paramount importance. To truly love women is to want to empower them and, by that, to empower all of us. Bisexuals are an important chapter in the larger civil rights struggle. The actions we must exercise toward women are the same we must exercise toward other oppressed communities with whom we should be allies, including racial, religious and other queer groups. With the rise of the tide, all boats are raised.

(YOUR) BODY MATTERS

INTERNATIONAL BiKONFERENZ

BAYARD RUSTIN HIGH SCHOOL

NEW YORK CITY

25.6.94

STONEWALL 25

(EXCERPTS FROM A SPEECH)

by Elias Farajajé-Jones

(i had originally written another text for this conference, but when i woke up on saturday morning, i was so pissed off that i felt that i really needed to speak to/call on those who had been at stonewall as street warriors, but who have been excluded from the subsequent "movement". and that is why this performance piece is done in the form of a letter to and/or a phone conversation with miss marsha p. johnson, an african american transgendered person who was there in the uprising and who was found not so long ago, stabbed and thrown into the hudson river in new york city).

dear miss marsha,

bodies matter; not numbers, not percentages, not statistics. bodies matter; not dances on warships, not ball-gowned and tuxedoed bodies only, but just plain old muthafukkin' bodies. dead bodies matter, dying bodies matter, infected bodies matter, disabled bodies matter, liberating bodies matter, decolonized bodies matter, poor bodies matter, coloured bodies matter, kweer bodies matter, working-class bodies matter, women's bodies matter, immigrants' bodies matter, prisoners' bodies matter, HIV bodies matter, cervical cancer bodies matter, breast cancer bodies matter, homeless bodies matter, pagan bodies matter, jewish bodies matter, haitian bodies matter, muslim bodies matter, animals' bodies matter, plants' bodies matter, earth's bodies matter, miss marsha p. johnson's decomposing-in-the-hudson-river body matters.

miss marsha, girl, you see i woke up this morning with my mind stayed on freedom and girl was i pissed. i mean, politeness kills. where is sylvia rivera? she was good enough to be a latina transgender warrior-person in the street guerrilla warfare called the stonewall uprising 25 years ago that led to us being here today; she was a good enough maricon to save the lives of the other young transgendered persons. but i guess that she just didn't make the A-list for this week. i guess they figured that she was not the body we want to present. her body matters, enough for her to be made invisible, impalpable, unheard.

i woke up this morning with my mind stayed on freedom and miss marsha, i'm telling you girl, all was not chill. miss baby, how did they stab you, kill you and throw you in miss hudson river and then kill you a second time by just writing you out of history. girl, you carried stonewall; you were a fierce and fabulous amazon transperson. your body mattered; enough to get rid of your ass twice.. you ain't on the A-list either, girl, i guess it's because your body matters and we can't have that anymore.

girl, we're kweer, and we're here and we're ruining it for everyone. well, that's just going to have to be the way it is. it seems to me, miss marsha, that everyone just wants to organise as though they were straight, as though we all just wanted to be straight. i don't want to be apologetic; i don't want to be so damned accommodating. and if it messes up the lesbigayristocracy's party, then too fucking bad. does the heterocracy ever try to accommodate us? i want to live in my body as i choose. i want to define myself and not be defined by others. my body matters, and so does yours, girl, i don't want to destroy myself and all that i love about being kweer just to be assimilated.

miss marsha, i woke up this morning with my mind stayed on freedom, but i am confused. i mean, haven't we forgotten our origins, our roots? weren't we born out of the stonewall rebellion/uprising? you were there, miss marsha: it was an uprising, wasn't it? it was street guerrilla warfare, wasn't it? it was not a T-dance, not a "Happy hour" (although the hour was a happy one). it was a liberation battle (i guess i'm a revisionist, miss thing) and part of a broader-based liberation struggle against all forms of oppression around the world; it was waged by kweer women and kweers of colour, many of whom are the very people that the so-called community now marginalises because they get in the way of assimilation into the dominating culture. but who decided that assimilation into an oppressive, classist, racist, sexist heteropatriarchal culture (instead of FREEDOM FOR ALL) was what we wanted? everybody is saying that we are just like everybody else? why don't they want to listen to me when i talk to them about white supremacy, or

about male-privilege, or about biphobia, or about immigration, or about prisons, or poverty, or HIV? like you, miss girl, i do not want to be just like everybody else if it means forgetting that bodies matter, if it means forgetting that the struggle against homophobia is the struggle against classism is the struggle against white supremacy is the struggle against male hatred of women; if it means that i can't liberate all bodies. I DO NOT WANT TO BE STRAIGHT, even in kweerface. your body matters to me. my body matters to you.

i refuse to be told what i can and cannot be, that i cannot be both and WE ARE NOT MINORITIES, NEITHER AS WOMEN, NOT AS PEOPLE OF COLOUR, NOR AS KWEER PEOPLE. together we are all the majority. we might be marginalised, we might be oppressed, we might be historically silenced, we might be made invisible, but we are not minorities. many of us have complex identities, being more than one thing at a time, being many things, being too many things! and it is high time that we stop apologising and begin to celebrate that. people of colour issues are lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender issues because there are people of colour in the kweer community; transgender/lesbian/bisexual/gay issues are people of colour issues because there are transgender/lesbian/bisexual/gay people in the people of colour communities. as miss andre (lorde) says, there can be no hierarchy of oppressions. all of our bodies matter.

you know miss marsha, i think i finally have it figure out: there's this thing called EROTOPHOBIA (i know that you love when i try to get real deep, girl). it means the fear of the erotic, fear of the power of the erotic. we coloured children know that the erotic covers a whole lot of stuff. it, erotophobia, makes us trivialise all that which is too blatantly erotic, too sexual precisely because of the power of the erotic. it makes us say: "Bis are silly; SM/leather is silly": this becomes a way of downplaying the importance of the power of the erotic. and this helps us to conform to erotophobic homophobia.

what did you say, girl? oh, that erotophobia piece works for you? yeah, girl: miss erotophobia will definitely give you fever for your nerves. this country if draped and drenched, soaked and socked in erotophobia, look at it this way: from childhood to old age, a norm of sexual development has been defined and all possible deviations described and proscribed. shit. it's not surprising that forms of sexuality that do not have reproduction as their sole purpose have been so violently attacked because they seem to celebrate sexuality for the sake of sexuality (like those REAL freaks who call themselves BISEXUALS)!

miss marsha, i don't understand what is going on: erotophobia has begun to make kweers censor other kweers about being "too" sexual, about their forms of sexuality as being too transgressive. some kweers find bisexuals an embarrassment because we just seem to be too sexual. we're not either/or; we don't fit into any boxes. we're just fucking up their groove.

now girl, i know you know how the transgendered communities and the leather/sm communities are also marginalised because they, too, stand in the way of joining the great white heterosexual host. and so, we have reproduced all of the patterns of the dominating culture. why do colonised peoples do this? if the religious right focuses on transgendered people the leather people in their films, then we are QUICK to respond by saying that THOSE people should not be visible in our public manifestations as they ruin our reputation. we can't even discuss the fact that children have sexualities without being afraid of being accused of being pedophiles or pro-pedophiles. so that's something else for us to condemn and it won't stop there. ultimately we'll end up condemning ourselves. hasn't that already happened? isn't that what we actually are doing? we buy into the erotophobia of the religious right and say that transgender/bisexual/leather/sm, etc. are just too blatantly and negatively sexual. everybody's racing to capitulate to erotophobia instead of challenging it. and in that moment, we have let ourselves be defined by homophobes. where is our self-definition? maybe it's because if we challenge erotophobia, we challenge all (white supremacy, classism, homophobia, hatred of women, etc.) all that stems from it. but then that would mean that your body matters.

miss marsha, girlfriend, your body matters and so does mine. that's why i'm not so sure anymore what lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender constructs mean anymore. what about straights who do not fit their category's own criteria and are punished for this? i guess i want to see a fluid spiraling circle of sexualities, not just a line. erotophobia has tried to lock us all up because our bodies matter too much to be free. bisexuals are a real threat in the eyes of erotophobia. and if we understand that attacking erotophobia attacks other forms of oppression at their root, then we're in trouble from the homophobes.

you know, miss marsha, i think i'm really an INTERSEXUAL: not an intermediate sex; but someone moving around, in between in and out of sexualities, in ever-spiraling circles. i'm an intersexual because i live at the intersexion of oppressions: that intersexion is our address and that's why they buried you, ms. marsha, right at that intersexion. black, transgendered, fierce, dead. your body matters.

i have to go now, girlfriend. looking at all of these folk who are here in new york this week just dying to be colonised is working my fucking nerves. it's mighty white out there this week. assimilation is not cute; the price is too high and it never works. but who listens to me: i just want to be me because my body matters. i hope that we bis don't forget that an anti-erotophobia movement is a real liberation movement. it's not about having your name on everything, because then you can't say anything, can't criticise anything. and some shit you just don't want to have your name on. marsha, do you believe that we bis can move beyond the comfort zone of our new acceptability? i guess i don't care anymore if you're bi or tri: what are you doing? are you still in the struggle? is your mind stayed on freedom?

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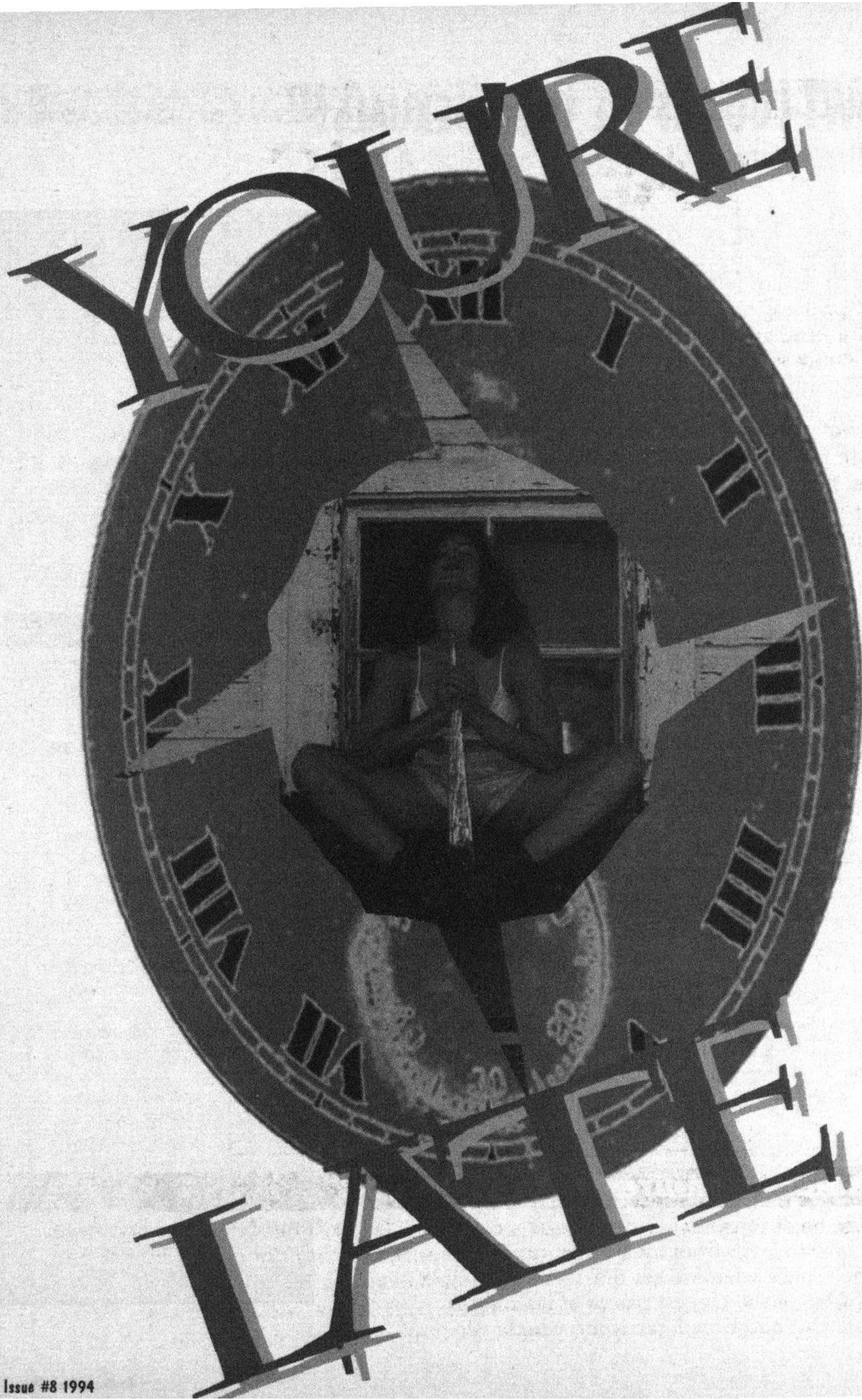


PHOTO BY AMY LARIMER

"Wow! Look at all the bisexuals!"

by Elise Matthesen

Those words kept going through my mind in New York City during the Stonewall 25 events, and at the International Conference Celebrating Bisexuality, where one would expect to be surrounded by bunches of bouncing bisexuals and their bi-friendly associates.

Actually, although I meant them quite seriously, the words have an ironic tinge, since they were the words of a Bi-Awareness tactic – you might almost call it a zap – used many years ago in Minnesota. Whenever the biphobia got too annoying at the Womyn's Coffeehouse or at various marches and events, one or another of us would say the phrase loudly in the middle of a crowded area and watch the reactions, which were usually pretty interesting in those anti-bi days.

The bisexuals in NYC for Stonewall, though, seemed real, tangible, right there, and I was glad. It was a delight to give the keynote address for the conference, to hear the roar of laughter at the words "bisexuality is not half homo and half hetero, half k.d. lang and half Heather Locklear." It was a joy to hear and see and meet bifolks and bifriendly folks from many countries and from many places in this country, and it was a particular honor to do the workshop "Joy and Juice: talking about sex" with Efrain Gonzales, Carol Queen, and Robert Morgan Lawrence first thing in the morning after the keynote address.

I could try to summarize the speech for you, but it doesn't pare down well; if I could have said it shorter, I would have. Instead, I'll tell you why we started out talking about sex right away in the morning at a conference where we were talking about our whole lives, not just the parts we call "sexual".

It's because sexual joy crosses boundaries, erases lines between us.

One thing I said in the speech is that if we're lucky, maybe we'll forget to pledge allegiance and remember how to learn from each other, regardless of the flags. That's what we set out to do in "Joy and Juice." One of the biggest places of learning is sex, and all the emotional territory which sur-

Excerpt from Elise's keynote address at ICCB

How many of you are on the 'Net? (hands) Well, there's a habit there, when you write and post something expressing your opinions and practices, of ending that message with the initials YMMV. Stands for "Your Mileage May Vary." Radical concept for some of us.

I learned about that once when I was asked to facilitate a meeting for a lesbian group on one of the many Twin Cities college campuses. They asked me because I had done some work at Take Back the Night and other venues where we encouraged women of many sexual identities and descriptions to talk across, around in spite of and about these differences. This lesbian group wanted me to facilitate their first meeting of the school year. The topic was lesbians and biwomyn working together in the group. It was a hot topic.

See, the previous year was the one where one lesbian member of the group had threatened to assault a bisexual member because of her orientation and presence in the group. When the bi woman was standing at the top of a stairwell after the meeting, the angry lesbian threatened to "push her down the stairs and break all her bones."

And the women leading the group this year wanted this year to go a little differently.

But what I wanted to tell you about was about how mileage varies. We had gotten partway through the meeting, sharing viewpoints about wonderful stuff, bi and lesbian identification and race and culture and class issues, ways that choices of meeting time or location affected women who were Jewish, women who were under legal drinking age, all sorts of really important issues that every group talks about when it gets real, and all of a sudden I asked how it felt to be talking about these things, and talking about being women who love women.

One woman said, "Well, it's kind of strange to be here. I'm an international student from the Netherlands, and at home everybody who is gay is just gay, like that, right in the open, so at home there would never be a group like this."

And I just sat there with my mental mouth hanging open saying to myself, "Yeah. Yeah, that's how it is, all right, each of us next door to each other with a completely alien yet familiar experience." And I wondered, not for the first time, how we'd ever learn to honor our differences.

If you want a copy of "Taking the Alternate Route," or a copy of Elise's keynote speech, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to: Elise Matthesen, 992 Chatsworth North, St. Paul, Minnesota 55103. Elise says that if you're really sweet, you'll enclose some extra stamps; some people always forget, and your kindness will be appreciated.

rounds sex. Since that territory differs for each of us, the notion that one flag can cover the "homeland of bisexuality" is probably wishful thinking at best, and reductionism or demanding adherence to a party line at worst.

What we did in that room was sit there in a big chaotic circle and talk about what turned us on. We did this consciously, knowing that there would likely be some moments in the upcoming weekend of activism and celebration when we'd feel overwhelmed by political infighting or external homophobia and biphobia, and we wanted to create a circle of delight to remember during those difficult moments. The circle we created was filled with the intense energy that comes with daring to talk about the stuff that usually doesn't get talked about so directly. We didn't talk about who we do; we talked about what, which led us to why, sideways. The things we discussed were the nitty-gritty of what we do, and that's where the "why" shone through. You could see the faces light up, sometimes just for the sheer novelty of talking about our sexual selves instead of always talking about how we have a right to them, or how to defend them, or trying to figure out how to deal with other people's efforts to appropriate or erase them, or all that jazz. We took it for granted that we were whatever we were, and went from there.

I like to think it made a difference for some of us, later, when we were going through the long crazy hyper parade and surrounding events that capped the Stonewall 25 commemoration.

I wound up taking quiet time and not marching; the story of how that came to be, and how it turned out, was published in *Gaze Magazine* under the title "Taking the Alternate Route." I'm currently hard at work on a book that I hope will be the book I wish I had been able to find when I was coming out, so notes of encouragement are also appreciated. And I promise you that, whatever else the book has in it, it will have enough room for all possible flavors of bisexuality in it. That's the goal, anyhow: to make enough books like that so that people can walk up to the shelf and say, "Wow! Look at all the bisexuals!"

After all, you've given me that, at the conference, and over the decades before. I'd like to return the favor.

Go Fish

by Sarah Pemberton Strong

"I wanted my mom to see this movie," said my friend Cherie on the way out of the theater. Given the amount of play *Go Fish* is getting in mainstream houses, there's a chance that Mom Will. If she does, she'll walk away with a slice of real-life dyke life for her money.

Which is the best thing about *Go Fish*. Despite its super-stylized, grainy black and white cinematography and its fairly conventional storyline (a lesbian take on Hollywood's favorite boy-meets-girl plot; in this case it's girl-meets-girl), *Go Fish* manages to be wonderfully, sometimes painfully real.

Max (Guinevere Turner) a sweet young thing in a baseball cap, hasn't had a date in ten months. Her roommate sets her up with Ely (V.S. Brodie), an older, ex-hippie type with an uncool haircut and too much herbal tea in her cupboard.

"U - G - L - Y, she ain't got no alibi," chants Max, but her friends conspire to throw the two of them together anyway, and the plat skips merrily along from there.

It's great to see dykes on screen. It's great to see a film set within the lesbian community: those tired themes, Being a Lesbian vs. Being Straight and What Will Society Think just don't exist here. There are no Well of Loneliness types, no suicides, no self-hating closet cases, and no bisexual murderesses. Whew!

In the absence of straight America's stereotypes, though, I wonder if director/co-writer Rose Troche isn't trying to create a few of her own. The supporting cast of characters reads like a who's who of Dykes to Watch Out For: there the African-American intellectual, there's her Latina girlfriend who isn't out to her family, there's the sex-happy whit girl who shows up with a different date in every scene. The characters are real enough but the coincidence makes me wonder...

Go Fish's will-they-or-won't-they plot is interspersed with a series of vignettes and telling details that run through the movie like anchors to life as it exists beyond getting a date. We see Evy (Migadalia Melendez), who still lives at home, thrown out of the house when her God-fearing Catholic mother discovers Evy's a lesbian. We see the fallout that occurs when Daria's (Anastasia Sharp) sex-positive lifestyle leads her to bed down with a man; in a wonderfully noirish sequence she's metaphorically abducted and interrogated by an angry lesbian

community demanding she relinquish her dyke credentials.

It is worth noting though, that these scenes, the most emotional and angry in the entire film, don't involve the main characters, and are utterly tangential to the plot. Maybe Troche is trying to have it all: charming romance and down and dirty foray into identity politics and its consequences. In the fanta-

sy/reality scene where Daria is kidnapped by angry dykes, the characters argue over whether she is still entitled to call herself a lesbian now that she has bonked a boy. A real closet of anxieties here, folks: the ensuing rants reflect what a touchy subject this issue of identity still is, the all-embracing "queer" label notwithstanding.

Through it all, Daria insists she is still a dyke; certainly it's the dyke world she inhabits. But for help with those they're-out-to-get-me nightmares, she could have dropped by the international bisexual conference while she was at Stonewall. Maybe next year, Daria?

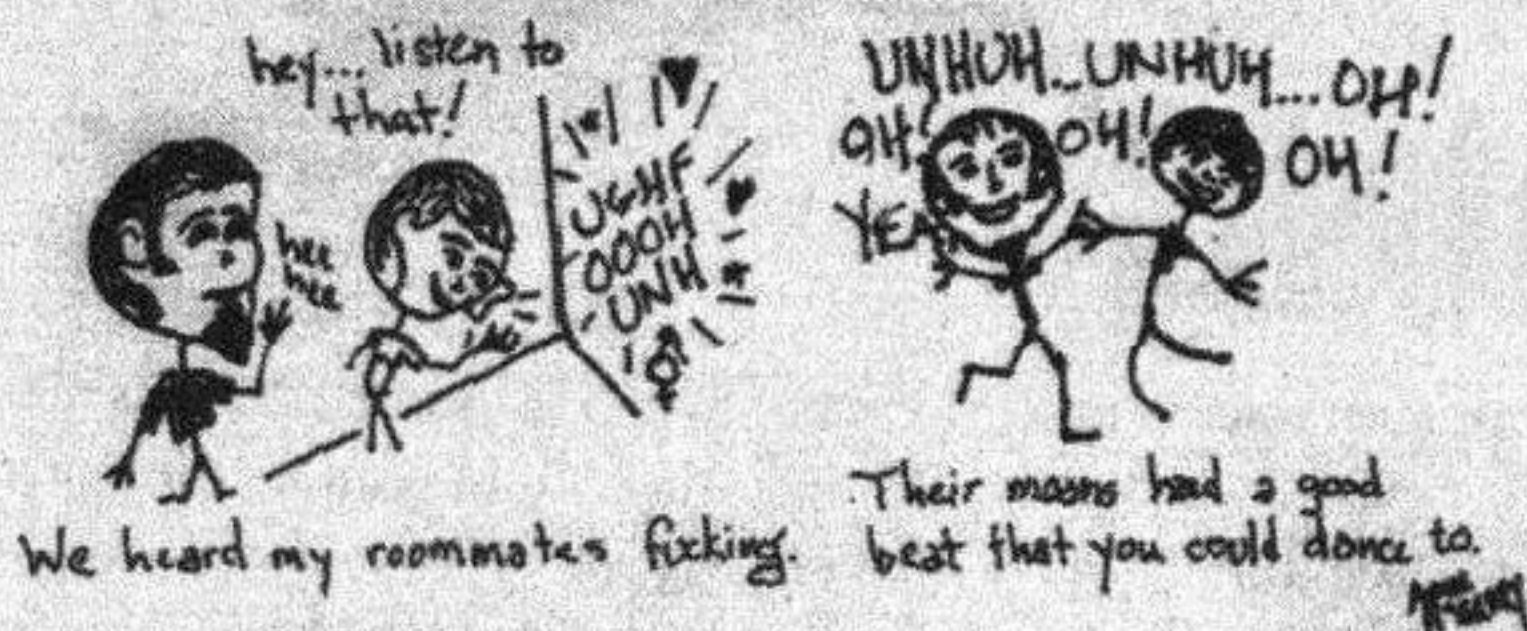
These scenes play with a non-judgmental eye and an emotional honesty absent from so many films with famous names and bigger budgets, and lend depth to *Go Fish*'s shiny surface without dragging the film down into diatribe. Indeed, *Go Fish* is at its weakest when it attempts a semi-tongue-in-cheek insertion of feminist theory. Max's roommate Kia (T. Wendy McMillan), in particular, as the resident professor and match-maker is weighted down with lines that sound lifted from a first-year women's studies lecture.

Rumor has it that Guinevere Turner is getting all sorts of offers from mainstream directors. It's easy to see why: her Max is charming and convincing; she's also young, white, and classically beautiful.

In my opinion though, the best thing in the film is V.S. Brodie. Her crossover potential is probably non-existent, but she plays Ely with an understated wit and diffident awkwardness that carries the film.

Go Fish probably won't go down in history as the greatest dyke film ever made, but as the first film to give us a no-apologies [portrayal/depiction] of the urban lesbian universe that is both skillful and entertaining. For this it deserves a long run—on the alternative film circuit and in those theaters frequented by everybody's mom back home.

**There are no
Well of Loneliness types,
no suicides, no self-hating
closet cases, and no
bisexual murderesses.**

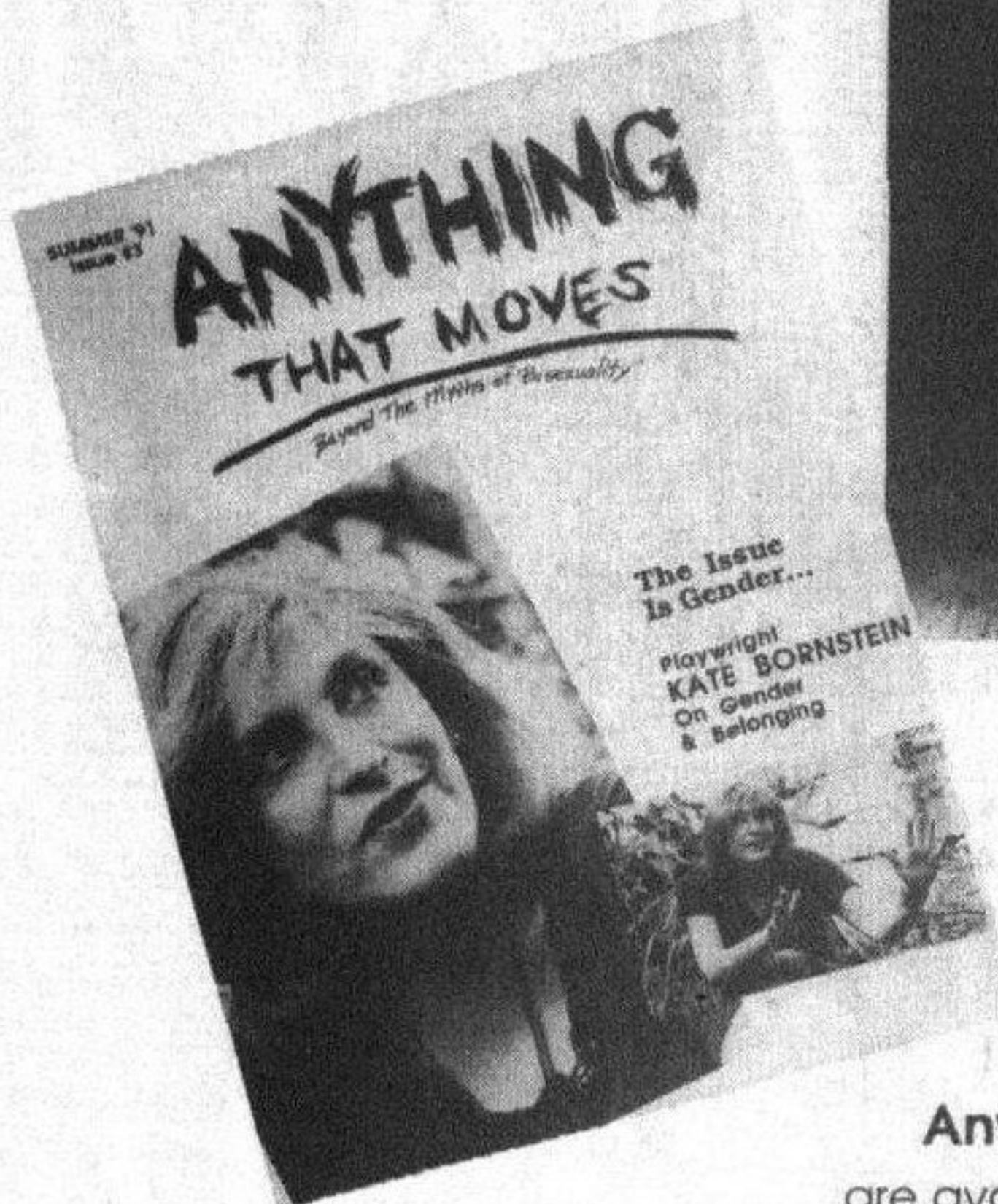


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***SWW* sez: Don't sweat the petty things, pet the sweaty things.**



BI COMMUNITY & RESOURCES

MIXED

Bay Area Bisexual Network: Forum 3rd Thursday of each month, 7:30 p.m. at Women's Bldg., 3543 18th Street, SF. Topics of interest to members of the bi community and their friends. BABN also sponsors a speaker's bureau of bisexuals from diverse backgrounds, races, lifestyles and cultures who speak on all topics and issues concerning bisexuality. Call 415/703-7977 voice mail box #1, or write BABN at 2404 California St., #24, SF, CA 94115.

Bi-Friendly San Francisco: Every Monday, 7:30 p.m. at the Village Deli. Join bisexual men and women at a SF cafe for dinner and conversation. Call Pierre 415/648-6332. To subscribe to a calendar of bi social events around the Bay Area, send \$10 to Pierre Dufour at 2336 Market St., #130, SF 94114. 415/703/7977, voicemail box #4.

Bi-Friendly East Bay: Every Tuesday, 7:30 p.m. Join other bisexual women and men at a Berkeley cafe for dinner and conversation. Call Betsy 510/845-7441.

Bi-Friendly of the Peninsula: 2nd and 4th Mondays, 7:30 p.m. Join bisexual women and men for dinner and conversation at Viccolo Pizza, 473 University Avenue, Palo Alto. Call Joyce at 415/856-6901.

BiPOL: The Bay Area Bi/Lesbian/Gay political action group. Meets monthly. Call 415/821-3534, voicemail box #2 or write 584 Castro St., #422, SF CA 94114.

Marin Bisexual Group: Bi social/support group meets 1st & 3rd Wednesdays of every month in central Marin. Interested women & men call Larry at 415/454-5638.

Bi Women and Men Open Rap: Every Sunday, 7-8:50 p.m., Pacific Center, 2712 Telegraph Avenue, Berkeley. Call 510/841-6224.

Games Night: Every Saturday, 6-9:45 p.m. at the Pacific Center, 2712 Telegraph Avenue, Berkeley. About 25-30 bis, gays and lesbians play cards, scrabble, etc., or watch videos. Call 510/841-6224.

Lavender SIG: A political & support network for fat bis, lesbians, gays & their allies. Part of NAAFA, a human rights organization. Send SASE to PO Box 210074, SF, CA 94121-0074.

Mother Goose Productions: Sponsors monthly Jack & Jill Off social gatherings for women, men, bi, gay, & lesbian. Send SASE to PO Box 3212, Berkeley, CA 94703.

Sacramento Area Bisexual Network: The purpose of this 100-member group is to educate, politicize, socialize and support one another, publish Bi Word of Mouth newsletter and do a bi radio show. Send SASE to PO Box 189146, Sacramento CA 95818, or call 916/863-3700.

Side by Side Sonoma: Bisexual women and men meet in Sebastopol for discussion and support, 2nd Wednesday, 7:30-9:30 p.m. Social gathering for bis and friends, 1st Saturday of each month. Call Pat or Chuck at 707/829-1415 or Colin at 707/823-2990.

Society of Janus: Educational programs, parties, newsletter, and mutual support for adults interested in consensual SM, BD, leather. Open to all sexual identities. Send SASE to PO Box 426794, SF, CA 94142-6794. Hotline: 415/985-7117.

There are more groups for women and men under the categories "Ethnic/Of Color" and "Parenting & Family."

There are TDD numbers for hearing-impaired bis under the categories "Ethnic/Of Color," "Health," and "Student & Youth."

WOMEN

Bay Area Bisexual Women's Network: Offer support/discussion groups, sponsor workshops, and organize women only events and social activities. Newsletter listing events & support groups. To receive newsletter (\$5/yr) or list women's group or women's event, call 415/485-1015 (evenings only).

Bisexual Women's Support Group: 1st & 3rd Sundays, 7:00 p.m. at the Unitarian Church, Rm. 6, 505 E. Charleston, Palo Alto. Call 415/961-9590 or Susan at 415/493-0406.

Bi Women's Group: Bisexual and bi-curious women have monthly potlucks in Palo Alto for support and socializing. Call True at 415/323-4227.

East Bay Bi Women's Support Group meets on the fourth Thursday of each month. To learn more, call Renée at 510/841-2101.

LABIA: Lesbians and Bi Women in Alliance meet every Thursday, 7:30 p.m. in Berkeley. Call Judith at 510/528-5331.

San Francisco Bisexual Women's Support Group: Meets on the 1st three Wednesday evenings, 7-9 pm. Wednesdays at Amazing Grace on Church nr Market. For info, call Ingrid at 415/775-2620.

Women's Bisexual Network of Santa Cruz & the Greater Monterey Bay Area: Resource and referral service for bi women. Call 408/427-4556 (voice mail).

Women's Coming Out Support Group: Every Wednesday, 6-7:30 p.m. at the Pacific Center, 2712 Telegraph Avenue, Berkeley. Focuses on coming out to self, friends, family, workplace. All women welcome. Newcomers arrive at 5:45. Call 510/841-6224.

Women's Spirituality Group: Meets monthly in Marin. Open to lesbians, bisexual and heterosexual women. Call Spectrum Center for Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Concerns at 415/457-1115.

Women's Electronic Mail Networks: ba.sappho for bi women and lesbians. BIFEM for bisexual women and transsexuals.

There are more groups for women under the categories "Ethnic/Of Color," "Student & Youth," and "Health."

MEN

Bisexual Men's Therapy Group: Focuses on relationship and communication issues. Call Ron Fox, M.S., MFCC at 415/751-6714. Fee.

Gay Men's Rap Group: Every Monday, 7:45-9:50 at the Pacific Center, 2712 Telegraph Avenue, Berkeley. 75-100 gay and bisexual men gather together, then divide into discussion groups by topic. Call 510/841-6224.

Married/Once Married Bi and Gay Men's Rap Group: Every Wednesday, 8-9:50 pm. Pacific Center, 2712 Telegraph Avenue, Berkeley. Call 510/841-6224.

Men's Resource Hotline: Listing of men's groups and resources dedicated to a positive change in male roles and relationships. Call Gordon at 415/453-2839.

MOVE (Men Overcoming Violence): Provides group and individual counseling for men who batter and community education on the issues of sexism, masculinity and male violence. Call 415/626-6683.

There are more groups for men under the categories "Ethnic/Of Color", "Student and Youth", "Health".

ETHNIC/OF COLOR

AMASSI: Provides support, affirmation and empowerment services to people of diverse sexual & ethnic backgrounds,

emphasizing Afro-Americans. Provides individual & couples counseling, support groups, AIDS education and support, outreach and community training inside the Afro-American community. 3419 Martin Luther King, Jr. Way, Oakland CA 94609. Phone: 510/601-9066.

Arab Bi/Lesbian/Gay Network: Bi/lesbian/gay people of Arab Heritage. Social political, educational. Write PO Box 460526, SF, CA 94114.

Asian Pacifica Sisters: Community-based organization for lesbians and bisexual women of Asian heritage around the Bay Area. Sponsors social, political and cultural/educational events. Write APS, PO Box 170596, SF, CA 94117 to get on mailing list. Send \$3.50 to receive a copy of Phoenix Rising newsletter. New members contact Caroline 415/621-2982 or Young 510/465-7394.

Bi Men of Color Group: Support and social. Call Kuwaza at 510/465-9671.

Black Men's Exchange: Every Friday, 8 p.m., 40-70 men of African-American heritage and diverse sexual expressions meet for social support and empowerment at AMASSI, 3419 Martin Luther King, Jr. Way, Oakland. A development committee meets separately to plan events. Oakland chapter and national headquarters: 510/839-9138. Other chapters listed under the category "Bis Beyond the Bay".

Brothers Loving Others Safely and Soundly: Every Saturday, 7 p.m. at AMASSI, 3419 Martin Luther King, Jr. Way, Oakland. Men of diverse sexual and ethnic backgrounds (with an emphasis on Afro-Americans) meet for support around risk reduction in behavior (such as AIDS and domestic violence) and making positive choices around their rage. Food is served. Call AMASSI 510/601-9066.

Gay Asian/Pacific Alliance (GAPA): Bi/Gay men of Asian and Pacific Island heritage. Sponsor events and the GAPA men's chorus. Publish magazine Lavender Godzilla: Voices of Gay & Bisexual Asian Pacific Men. Write PO Box 421884, SF, CA 94142.

GAPA Political Action/Awareness: Call

Bang Nguyen at 415/552-8750

GAPA Rap: Bi/gay Asian/Pacific Islander men's support group. Meets bi-monthly. Call 415/252-1163.

Jewish Bisexual Caucus: Discussion, support, social. Meets monthly. Call Jim at 415/337-4566.

Lavender Dragon Society: Group where Chinese and Chinese-American gay and bisexual men get to be Chinese and queer at the same time. Call Daniel at 415/992-2656.

LYRIC (Lavender Youth Recreation and Information Center): Groups for young African-Americans. Many other groups. Se habla espanol; Nagsasalita kami ng Tagalog. Call the hotline for schedule: 863-3636 in San Francisco; elsewhere 1-800-246-PRIDE. TDD# 415/431-8812. Also see the "Student & Youth" category.

Sister Love: Every Thursday, 7 p.m. at AMASSI, 3419 Martin Luther King, Jr. Way, Oakland. For women who love women. Diverse ethnic backgrounds and sexual identities; emphasizes Afro-Americans. Food is served. Call 510/601-9066.

3 X 3: Bi People of Color Caucus: Resource/support/political action/social group building coalitions for a bi community that empowers all people. Call Lani at 415/703/7977, voicemail box #3.

There are more groups for men of color under the category "Health".

There is a group for people of color under the category "Transgendered".

TRANSGENDERED

Education TV Channel (ETVC): Open, supportive gender group with over 400 members from 23 states and 3 foreign countries. Serves educational, social, support, and recreational needs of transvestites, transsexuals, and others whose social role differs from the role considered appropriate for their genetic sex. For info

or newsletter write PO Box 6486, SF, CA 94101. Send \$2 for directory of support groups and computer bulletin boards.

Rainbow Gender Association (RGA): Meets 1st & 3rd Fridays of each month in San Jose. Write RGA, PO Box 700730, San Jose, CA 95170.

Transgendered Support Group: Every Monday, 7 p.m. at AMASSI, 3419 Martin Luther King, Jr. Way, Oakland. For TGs of diverse ethnic backgrounds and sexual orientations; emphasizes Afro-Americans. Food is served. Call 510/601-9066.

Transgender Youth Support Groups: All support groups at LYRIC (Lavender Youth Recreation and Information Center) are open to transgender youth. Call 415/863-3636 (outside San Francisco call 1-800-246-PRIDE). See individual group listings under the category "Student and Youth".

STUDENT & YOUTH

Androgynous Bisexual Club (ABC): Formed at Santa Rosa Junior College in April '93. Leave message at Student Activities Office, 707/527-4424.

Bisexuals, Gay and Lesbians at Davis: social, educational and support. Write 433 Russell Blvd., Sacramento CA 95616.

Coming Out Youth Group: Meets at LYRIC (Lavender Youth Recreation and Information Center). Support group for gay, bi, lesbian, transgender, and questioning youth. Call hotline for schedule: 863-3636 in San Francisco; elsewhere 1-800-246-PRIDE. TDD# 415/431-8812.

Gay and Lesbian Alliance (GALA): Gay, lesbian and bi students at Santa Rosa Junior College provide peer support, educate others, serve on panels in sociology and psychology classes, sponsor parties, and provide good role models for relationships. GALA meets weekly September to May. Leave message at Student Activities Office 707/527-4424.

Gay/Lesbian Alliance at Sonoma State

(GLASS): Leave message at Student Union 707/664-2382.

Lesbian/Gay/Bi Alliance at SF State: Support, events, newsletter. Write LGBA, Room 100A, Student Union Building, San Francisco State University, SF CA 94132.

Lesbian/Gay/Bi Alliance at San Jose State: Social and educational group at San Jose State University. 408/236-2002.

Multicultural Bi/Lesbian/Gay Association (MBLGA) at UC Berkeley. Call 510/642-6942.

New Horizons: Every Thursday, 7:45-9:30 pm at Spectrum, 1000 Sir Francis Drake Blvd, #12, San Anselmo. Support group for lesbian, gay, bi and questioning young adults, age 22-29. Call 415/457-1115.

Rainbow's End: Every Thursday, 6:30-8:30 pm at Spectrum, 1000 Sir Francis Drake Blvd, #12, San Anselmo. Support group for lesbian, gay, bi and questioning youth, age 14-23. 415/457-1115.

23 or Under Group: Every Saturday, 1:30-3 pm, 40-60 gays, bis and lesbians through age 23 gather for support and discussion at the Pacific Center, 2712 Telegraph Avenue, Berkeley. Call 510/841-6224.

Young Men's Group: Every Friday, 7-9 pm at LYRIC. Support group for young men age 12-23 who are gay, bi, transgender, or questioning. Call 863-3636 in San Francisco; elsewhere 1-800-246-PRIDE, TDD# 415/431-8812.

Young Women's Group: Every Monday, 7-9 pm at LYRIC. Support group for young women age 12-23 who are lesbian, bi, transgender, or questioning. Call 863-3636 in San Francisco; elsewhere 1-800-246-PRIDE, TDD# 415/431-8812.

There are also groups for youth listed under "Health" and "Transgendered".

HEALTH & SUPPORT

AIDS Health Project: Support group for gay and bi men who are HIV+. Support group for gay and bi men who are HIV negative. Structured 8-week groups meet at the agency; on-going groups meet in private homes. Call Carmen Chavez 415/476-3902.

ARC/Early AIDS Group: Every Thursday, 6-8 pm, at Operation Concern, 1853 Market (at Guerrero), SF. Gay and bi men discuss the experience of living with the diagnosis. Led by a licensed counselor. Free. Drop-in; no appointment necessary. For info call 415/626-7000.

Bay Positives: A support group for young people who test positive. Call Julie Graham 415/386-4615.

CURAS: Prevention and education referral services for bi and gay Latino men. Call 415/255-2731.

The Deaf Gay/Lesbian Center: Serves the needs of deaf & hard-of-hearing members of the gay and lesbian community. Also offers American Sign Language classes to the hearing gay and lesbian community. Responsive to bisexual people. TDD# 415/885-2341. Hearing callers may call 1-800-735-2922 and ask to be connected to this TDD#.

Filipino Task Force on AIDS: 1540 Market Street, #275, SF, CA 94102. 415/703-9880. Provides prevention and intervention case management, referrals, HIV prevention education, translation services. Serves people of all ethnic backgrounds and sexual orientations who are HIV infected, with a focus on Filipinos. A support group for HIV+ people and their lovers meets in members' homes for potlucks, sometimes has speakers.

GAPA HIV Project: Emotional and practical support targeting bi and gay men of Asian/Pacific Islander heritage. Call Wayne Chan 415/568-4532.

HIV+ Drop-In Group: Every Thursday

6-8 pm at Operation Concern, 1853 Market (at Guerrero), SF. Support, info, and discussion for gay and bi men who are HIV+. Led by a licensed counselor. Free. Wheelchair accessible. Call 415/626-7000.

Living Well with AIDS/ARC: Support group based on Attitudinal Healing Principles. Call 415/621-1701.

Lyon Martin Clinic: Primary health care for and by women, particularly bi and lesbian, in SF. Call 415/565-7667.

LYRIC: Provides HIV prevention/education groups for youth. Call the hotline for schedule: 863-3636 in SF; elsewhere 1-800-246-PRIDE. TDD# 415/431-8812.

Operation Concern: Mental health concerns of bis, lesbians, and gay men. Individual and group counseling available. Call 415/626-7000.

Spectrum Center for Lesbian, Gay & Bisexual Concerns, 1000 Sir Francis Drake Blvd, #12, San Anselmo, CA 94960. Provides spiritual and practical support to people with AIDS and HIV+. 415/457-1115.

Substance Abuse Support Group: Every Thursday, 7-8 pm, at Operation Concern, 1853 Market St. (at Guerrero), SF. This drop-in group is free and offers information about OC's substance abuse program. Open to bis. On-going groups cost \$11-34 sliding scale, and members must also be in individual counseling. Call 415/626-7000.

PARENTING & FAMILY

IntiNet Resource Center: Supports loving, committed, ethical multi-partner relationships. Sponsors workshops and ongoing groups for responsible non-monogamists, offers speakers bureau, and publishes a quarterly newsletter for members. All sexual preferences welcome. Info packet: POB 4322-AA, San Rafael, CA 94913-4322. 415/507-1739.

Lesbian/Gay/Bi Parents Group: Meets monthly in different homes in Marin. For info call Spectrum, 415/457-1115.

Park Hop Doo Wop: Social group/extended family for bi, lesbian, gay, and hip hetero parents of children 12 and under. Info: 415/637-9125.

PEP: National member network for people seeking polyfidelitous relationships. Focuses on group marriage and multiple adult, committed relationships. Newsletter includes ads, education and info. Call Ryam at 808/929-9691. (Hawaii)

NEW GROUPS

BREATHE - Bisexual Revolutionaries Engaged in Art to Heal the Earth. Performance/play group starting - must be bisexual, radically bi-positive, or both. Explore/explode the dichotomy of overly political art versus art that is non-dogmatic and free. Emphasis on support, consensus and encouragement, doing things we've never done before, speaking our own truths, ensemble work, and creating power from within. A safe space for us to radically risk. All cultures, races, genders, etc. "encouraged to apply". Call Ian at 415/550-1368 or 415/648-9139.

Blur Brigade is a supportive social youth group for young people who don't fit into society's either/or categories. We sponsor monthly events, BBQ's, film festivals, and discussions about what it means to be young and bi in the '90s. We take action in our communities for political, social, or cultural change. The group is open to bisexuals and those exploring sexual identity who are 27 or younger. 415-648-9384

HIV support groups for the bisexual community are being formed. Possible groups could include bisexual men and/or women who are HIV+, negative partners of positive individuals, and perhaps a couples support group. We may also form a group for people in the "kink" (SM/sex parties, etc.) communities who may find the usual HIV groups too judgmental for mutual support. Call Brian 415/221-3360.

Bay Area Visual Artist Critique Group: Meeting to share and critique each other's artwork. Call Claude, 415/821-7282 for information.

BIS BEYOND THE BAY

BiNet USA: This umbrella network of bi groups and individuals in the U. S. formed at the 1990 National Bisexual Conference. PO Box 7327, Langley Park MD 20787. Phone: 202/986-7186.

Black Men's Exchange: African-American men of diverse sexual expressions meet for social support & empowerment.

• Oakland headquarters: 510/839-9138

• Atlanta: 404/627-5148

• Denver: 303/837-1530

• Detroit: 313/361-6037

• Los Angeles: 310/281-7742

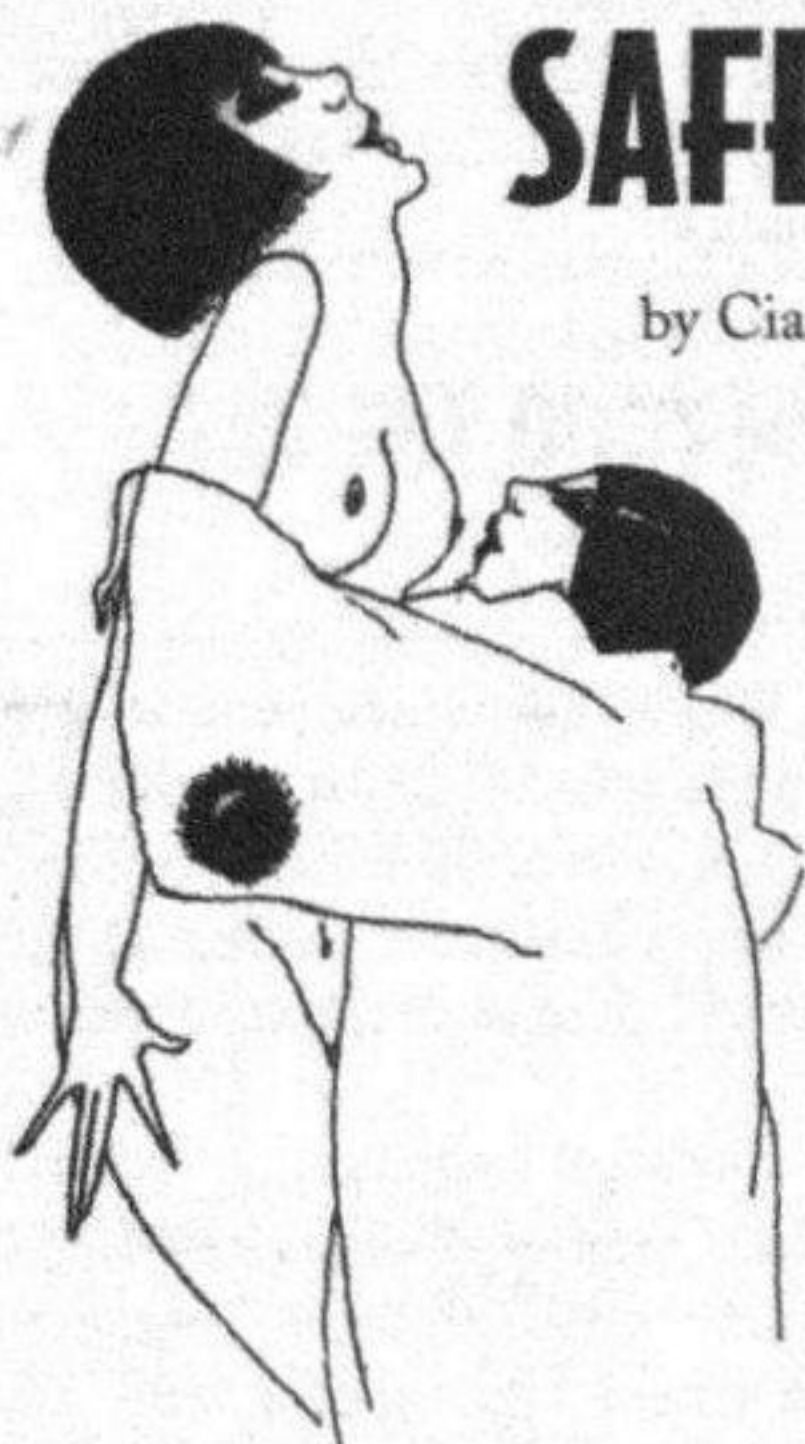
• Philadelphia: 215/848-4892

• Sacramento: 916/487-0439

International Directory of Bisexual Groups: Comprehensive listing of bi groups all over world, including the U.S. Updated bi-annually. Send \$5.00 (or \$6.50 in U.S. currency if outside the U.S.) to: BRC, POB 639, Cambridge MA 02140.

Unitarian Universalist Bisexual Network: A packet of materials of interest to bisexuals, including a newsletter, is available from the Unitarian Church by sending \$10 to UUBN, POB 10818, Portland ME 04104.

Vancouver (BC) Bis: BiFace, a mixed gender bi social and support group, meets first and third Tuesdays, 7:30-10:30 pm. For info, call the BiLine at 604/681-8815. Someone answers the line personally Mondays, 8-10 pm.



SAFER & SEXIER

by Cianna Stewart

“Safer sex” means using barriers during sex to keep yourself and your partner(s) from exchanging bodily fluids which carry HIV. Using safer sex also protects you from many STDs.

Safer sex does not mean asking your partners about who they’ve slept with and then deciding, based on that information alone, that it’s okay to have unsafe sex. This

ignores the fact that there are a number of ways to contract HIV, including sharing rigs while using injection drugs. This also does not ask what kinds of sex they had, whether safe or not, and does not at all address what partners their partners have had. This is also not a safe method for many bis, since both homophobia and heterophobia on the part of our partners can affect how we answer and/or how they answer us. Beyond that, people have been known to change answers based on whether they think you’ll still sleep with them if they answer honestly.

Safer sex does not mean simply being in a monogamous relationship. You may have been monogamous for all of two weeks. Or perhaps either you or your partner is a serial monogamist, who still has been known to have many partners in one year.

Safer sex means educating yourself, planning enough to get the supplies, and keeping them close at hand. If you have to get out of bed, go into another room, or simply left the stuff at home, you’re giving yourself one more excuse to not play safely. Keep some next to your bed, in the kitchen, out by the pool, on your person, in your car, at the office, wherever you have sex. (Lucky you—at the office?!)

Safer sex means being ok with talking about what you want. That can include “let’s use this” and “I don’t want to do that” and “a little more to the left...”

THE STUFF

(my favorite part!!)

Lubricant

For a lot of sex play, especially with latex, using a lubricant of some kind is highly recommended. Use a water-based lube, not a petroleum-based one, because petroleum products break down latex.

Tips/Ideas:

- Many lubes contain Nonoxynol-9, which does help fight HIV, but may also cause an allergic reaction. Women are espe-

cially sensitive to it. Check the ingredient list.

- Keep some water near wherever you have sex in a spray bottle or a squirt gun. If your lube begins to dry out, add water.

- For your travel pack, pick up lube samplers from anywhere you buy lube. You can also often get some for free from health offices, AIDS outreach services, and HIV testing sites.

Lube makes everything wet and slippery. I can feel more. So can my partner(s). I can play longer. A lot longer. I have become a major lube fetishist. So can you.

Plastic Wrap

Already around many households, plastic wrap can be used for oral sex on women or for oral/anal play with men or women (rimming). On the microwavable/non debate: you only have to worry about microwavable wrap becoming porous if your body heats up to over 165°F.

Tips/Ideas:

- Take it out of the box to unroll and cut it by tearing it, so you don’t get cut by the little razor edge on the box.

- Put some lube on his/her skin before wrapping. It’ll feel better.

- Don’t stretch the wrap tight, just lay it against the skin, sticking it on with the lube. This will help keep it from tearing, and you’ll also be licking all those nooks and crannies, not a flat sheet of plastic.

Plastic wrap is clear, thin, strong, and doesn’t taste like latex. You can see through it. You can smell through it. It also comes in rolls so you aren’t restricted on size. Plastic wrap is also useful as a restraint...

NEXT ISSUE: Condoms, toys, and hands-free oral sex fun...

Point of clarification: In the last issue I said “HIV has been found in breast milk, not in high levels, but still definitely present.” Apparently, I mixed some stuff up. Breast milk has been documented as a route of transmission, but that info has apparently not spurred anyone into actually testing it for HIV. Go figure.

Cianna Stewart works as a Peer Safer Sex Slut with Lyon-Martin Women’s Health Services in San Francisco. She swears that she’s never enjoyed sex as much as she does now.

ANYTHING THAT MOVES

CHAPTER FOUR
by Roberta Gregory

Laraine and I are going on a Day trip up to Crystal Falls on Saturday... would you like to come along?

I dunno... I WAS going to help collect signatures for the Gay Rights Initiative to counter that ANTI-Gay Rights Initiative...

I don't think ANYBODY'S going to accuse you of not being politically involved enough... That's all you ever seem to DO nowadays...

I KNOW... It's been a WEEK since I've seen Bob...



I just thought you might like to give your brain a REST for once... Get out in the WOODS... Get your NECK unkinked... Laraine introduced me to this GROUP of hers... if I'd known Lesbians had so much FUN, I'd've come out YEARS ago!

"HYKIN' DYKES... The Lesbian hiking and camping club..." Hmmm

I dunno... they're LESBIANS... I don't know if they'd WANT me along...

But... that's DIFFERENT... I guess...

That doesn't seem to stop you from running yourself ragged in the ACTIVIST arena! BESIDES... it sounds like you've pretty much been a Lesbian all your LIFE...



ANYHOW, it's BEYOND that... "pretty much" that's the PROBLEM! I feel like I'd be... MISLEADING them! What if someone asks me if I'm... SINGLE? What do I SAY? I don't want to get stuck out in The Woods with a bunch of resentful DYKE SEPARATISTS! Poor BOB! HE likes hiking, too! He's going to feel LEFT OUT!

I think you'll "PASS"! And, until there's a BI-FRIENDLY hiking club in this town, you'll just have to...

That's an EXCELLENT IDEA! A... BI-FRIENDLY hiking club! Shouldn't be TOO MUCH work... make some FLYERS... Put them up... run a few ADS... What should I call it...? mm... "BI-WAYS"... no... "LET'S GO BI-BYE"...? Hmm... Guess I need to get some books on local TRAILS and things...



Well... at least THIS time she's compulsively rushing... TOWARDS something...

MORE TO FOLLOW!



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